

**DOING LIFE:
A DISCIPLESHIP PROGRAM FOR YOUTH MINISTRY
TO TRANSITION HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS INTO COLLEGE**

**A THESIS-PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF
GORDON-CONWELL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY**

**BY
MARCUS HILL**

MAY 2016

To my grandmother Martha Janice Small

December 29, 1928 – May 23, 2004

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Kenneth Swetland for serving as my mentor and thesis supervisor respectively. Dr. Swetland gave expert advice, invaluable feedback and encouragement throughout my residencies and thesis project.

I would like to thank Dr. David Currie for his extraordinary teaching and being the 2nd reader of my thesis.

I would like to thank Dr. Peter Cooper for his expertise as Editor and Dr. Bryan Auday for his methodology guidance.

I would like to thank every student who has allowed me the privilege to “Do Life” with them, including every college students who participated in the questionnaire of this thesis project.

I would like to thank Bridges Community Church of Los Altos, California, respectfully the pastors, church staff and church family. The weight of this thesis project would have been immensely harder without their support.

I would like to thank my family, particularly my mother, Irene Hill, for her unwavering support for her son.

ABSTRACT

Research suggests that students entering their freshman year of college are losing their faith and walking away from the church. The purpose of this thesis project is to develop an age-appropriate discipleship program for high school students in youth ministry to reduce chances of them losing their faith. The project consists of surveying eighteen college students between the ages of 18-22 who were taught elements of the Doing Life discipleship model and interviews with high school students. After a review and examination of these elements, this project offers a small group guide, teaching curriculum, and theological foundations on a student ministry structure to retain transitioning high school students into college while cultivating a relationship with Christ.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Problem and the Thesis

While current research suggests that students entering their freshman year of college are losing their faith and walking away from the church, existing student ministry programs have a tremendous opportunity to mentor, teach, and disciple the lives of our current generation of students. “Doing Life” is how we disciple students now in order to help keep them in the church later. This thesis-project addresses how to develop an age-appropriate discipleship curriculum to prepare students for a life-long journey with God, beginning with their middle school years. A study conducted by David Rudd between April and May of 2007 on “Church Dropouts: How many leave Church between ages 18-22 and why” shows that about 70% of 23-30 year olds stopped attending church regularly for at least a year between ages 18-22.”¹ These statistics are incredibly alarming. Having been in ministry for over fifteen years, this author has had the opportunity to experience this issue first hand.

The goal of this thesis-project is to create a student discipleship curriculum that will teach students how to live relationally with God. In today’s society, students have trouble connecting with others, let alone God. Remember the woman who “touched”

¹ David Rudd, “Church Dropouts: How Many Leave Church and Why,” *SlideShare*, posted August 2007, accessed August 25, 2015, <http://www.slideshare.net/daverudd/church-dropouts-how-many-leave-church-and-why>.

Jesus' garment? To touch - touching is intimate. Jesus could feel it. The woman could feel it. Something big happened when she made physical contact with the Lord; youth pastors disciple students by reaching out to them, and relating with them. Youth pastors should not be afraid to have points of connection with students. We should yearn for that, in fact. It's as if every youth pastor, leader, and parent needs to have a similar heightened awareness of this: we are one Body in Christ. No person, especially a student, is meant to be apart from the Body of Christ. The elbow needs the shoulder, and the shoulder needs the spine. This thesis-project will be a discipleship curriculum that connects all the moving parts in student ministry from middle school through college, increasing faith and decreasing the dropout rate among young adults.

For the purpose of this thesis-project, the focus will be to create a curriculum that will cultivate a student's faith as they matriculates through middle school into college. It is important to clarify that students who stop attending church do not necessarily lose their faith. The Church may be defined as a community of believers who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord.² Author Jonathan Morrow states, "The Christian life is a walk of faith-continuing acts of obedience."³ When students no longer believe and trust in God, they have lost their faith. This definition goes for students who attend church, yet do not believe in God. Although college students tend to decrease regular attendance, this thesis will focus on those who are disconnected from the faith and as a

² 1 Corinthians 12:3.

³ Jonathan Morrow, *Welcome to College: A Christ-Follower's Guide for the Journey* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2008), 45.

result, have dropped out of church in general. Because of the high statistics cited earlier, it should be every youth pastor passion to “do life” with students.

“Doing Life” with students has three main components. First, it must be Christ-centered. God must be in the midst of any one-on-one or small group relationship in which fellow Christians journey together. Second, “Doing Life” must be experiential. It is a transforming ministry that is filled with compassion, grace, and love. Those who wish to “do life” with students must have a purpose and vision that is driven through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Paul said, “It is God which works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.”⁴ Everything we do comes from Christ working within us, for his glory, and supported by the Holy Spirit anointing.

Third, “doing life” together seeks to foster integrity, faith in God, and life in community with others. “Doing life” together operates under the theme that our lives and our choices affect the broader community of believers. We must be intentional about holding one another up, being accountable to God’s word, and walking with one another through difficult times. This includes rejoicing with one another during good times and staying with one another through difficult trials. “Doing life” together demands no extraordinary expectation except to love God and one another, and to experience the redemptive love of Christ through fellowship, prayer, communion, and community. Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, “Because Christian community is grounded on

⁴ Philippians 2:13.

Jesus Christ, it is a spiritual and not a psychic reality. In this it differs absolutely from all other communities.”⁵

Ministry Context

I am currently “doing life” with several students at Bridges Community Church and Los Altos Christian Schools in California. In “doing life,” I am demonstrating the transformational power of the gospel of Christ through grace, love, compassion, and what Christian community means for those who become a Christ follower. Sometimes, I am afraid that I am going to say the wrong thing or do something that does not imitate Christ. I am certain I am not the only one with this fear. It is my hope that I accurately portray Christ in what I say and do. My hope is that this thesis-project will become an aid to help others as well.

Paul once advised Timothy, saying, “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, and of love and of a sound mind.”⁶ It is my prayer that Christ continues to foster his spirit to live within me, and within other youth workers as they read this thesis. There is no greater joy than to walk with students who are not Christians so they may see the goodness of Jesus, or to do life with Christian students so both our lights can shine together that God may receive the glory alluded to in the Gospel.

⁵ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1954).

⁶ 2 Timothy 1:7.

My ministry calling comes from a deep-rooted thirst to fulfill God's will by mentoring others with grace, love, compassion, demonstrating a Christianity that offsets the loneliness and despair those without Christ endure. No one should ever feel alone in a world where there are millions of Christians. Because we are God's children, "doing life" in Christian community should be evident in a transparent lifestyle that exemplifies grace, love, and compassion within the context of community. This vision comes from those who have "done life" with me, walking with a vision of integrity.

As the Pastor of Student Ministries of Bridges Community Church (BCC) and Dean of Spiritual Life at Los Altos Christian Schools (LACS), I begin by addressing this problem in my local church and the greater Christian community. I have served in youth ministry for over 15 years, across the country with different denominations. My current ministry context consist of ministering to 200 students from pre-kindergarten through 8th grade at LACS and 100 students from middle school through college at BBC.

Both BCC and LACS is comprised of 40 percent Asian, 59 percent Caucasians and 1 percent other. Our church mission is to connect our diverse community to God and becoming more Christ-like. The office of Spiritual Life at LACS provides support for all spiritual life programs that place on and off campus. As Dean of Spiritual Life, my job is to assist students, parents, and teachers with their spiritual journey.

There is a national epidemic of students leaving youth groups and churches, completely abandoning their faith by freshman year of college. My theory is that youth pastors are not equipped with the correct skills to disciple youth in a 21st century world

dominated by social media, extra-curricular activities, and just plain over scheduled students.

Importance of the Study

Student discipleship is an important issue. I have seen a lot of youth pastors experience ministry burnout, and I have witnessed too many students leave the faith. In a world where time is money, and more students need care and discipleship, it is hard to know how to disciple students in a way that will encourage them to continue to practice their faith, and to be actively involved in the church beyond their high school years.

The following is a list of reasons why students have left the faith observed during my years in ministry:

- Student's worldview changes when interacting with other religions.
- Student's not being able to connect their faith with the real world.
- Busy schedule with school, work and extra-curricular activities.
- Feelings of disconnectedness from God
- Raised in a "religious" home and wants to rebel.
- Angry at God.
- Angry at self, wants to punish God.

We must do all we can to build, cultivate, and restore students back to their faith. God says in his word, "If anyone wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from

death and cover a multitude of sins.”⁷ This thesis-project will help youth pastors, leaders, and parents with important data, to create a discipleship program. This program will help provide a safe place for students to learn, share, and instill a feeling of safety and awareness regarding the role their faith in college. This is our job, our role as the youth pastor and church.

Author J. Budziszewski writes about his own experience of being a Christian through high school until he lost his faith during freshman year of college. He states, “I had my own ideas about redeeming the world, and my politics became a kind of substitute religion.”⁸ This story is like so many other stories I have heard from college students across the country. It is never convenient to attend church while in college. Most Christian colleges offer some type of Bible study program, but without a car, and an unfamiliarity with people on campus during the freshman year, a student’s faith can begin to fade or become replaced with ethics and politics. In Budziszewski’s own account, he said, “I began looking for reason to believe that He didn’t exist.”⁹ This makes this discipleship curriculum even more important as I hope to address ways students can combat the yearning of wanting to become an atheist.

⁷ James 5:19-20.

⁸ J. Budziszewski, *How to Stay Christian in College* (Colorado: Navpress 1991), 16.

⁹ Budziszewski, *How to Stay Christian*, 16.

Application of the Thesis

The application of this student discipleship curriculum begins with praying and discerning those who God wishes for me to disciple. Greg Ogden notes the biblical model in which Jesus chooses his twelve apostles in which it is estimated that, four to six months into Jesus' public ministry, he selected twelve of his disciples from the larger group to become his twelve apostles.¹⁰ Luke 6:12-13 notes that prior to this selection, Jesus went into the mountain to pray, and he spent the night in prayer with God. Jesus was always intentional about being in community, but he was also intentional about seeking our Father's discernment when making decisions. This is important and vital in the Doing Life model. The Holy Spirit should guide in the discernment process of deciding whom to disciple and with whom to "do life."

The Bible provides instructions on how to transform our lives for Christ and instructions on how to handle our relationship with Christ when our life has been transformed. The Bible is the good news that we must preach and teach to our disciples. The good news must be lived out, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, so that it will be self-evident to those with whom God calls us to do life. Ogden notes that the only way for Jesus to grow flawed and faithless common people into mature disciples, and to make sure that his kingdom transcends his earthly ministry, is to have a core who knows

¹⁰ Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 60.

in depth his person and mission.¹¹ For this reason, I believe my pastoral skills are best utilized in the individual shepherding of his sheep.

This thesis-project will help solidify the important theological views and personal convictions I feel are important to student ministry. I believe it is important to teach good theology while “doing life” with believers and non-believers. Chapter two will illustrate what I believe to be the biblical foundation in which Jesus has called us to discipleship, particularly with students. In Luke 5.1-11, Jesus called his first disciples. The biggest choice that Simon Peter, James, and John had to make was to be a follower of Christ. They made the choice on the boat, and they became the forefathers of the church. This curriculum is meant to make disciples of middle school and high school schools, propelling them to continue their faith journey in college.

Jesus called people to be his disciples. Chapter two will also discuss how the Old Testament, the Torah, and the Covenant were essential to how discipleship began. In the New Testament gospel’s, Jesus disciples were called “followers.”¹² While Jesus “did life” with his disciples, they learned from him. Then, Jesus sent his followers out to “do life” with others. For the disciples to learn at the degree that they did, it required a relationship with the master who knew the way of life. This type of discipleship is critical for students, but it must involve the church, the youth pastor, and parents.

¹¹ Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 65.

¹² Mark 4:10.

The role of the church is so important in what we believe about Christ. A.W. Tozer wrote, "What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."¹³ This is true as I think about my role in ministry and how my view of theology will shape and impact those I mentor and disciple. Because of my convictions, and how I see the role of the church, I believe in my strength in communications; ideation and strategic planning will help implant discipleship in the church, non-profit organizations, and academic institutions.

The application of the student discipleship curriculum in chapters 3 and 4 will outline one-on-one mentoring, small groups, and individual shepherding as necessary parts of "doing life." The calling to "do life" with others is met with discernment and prayer for those students God will send into discipleship. In the church setting, the "Doing Life" curriculum is most effective with small groups of 5-7 people. Those within the small groups, who need extra guidance, can be partnered with mature young adults in the church for a pre-determined period of time. There is an appropriate season for everything in life.¹⁴ "Doing life" with people is a seasonal ministry; student ministry itself is a seasonal ministry. It is seasonal for youth pastors, students, and even parents, as someday they will become empty nesters. "Doing life" requires that we understand the seasons of life and disciple students in whatever season they are experiencing. The goal is to teach them how to stay the course in their faith journey, and to lead and disciple

¹³ A.W. Tozer, *The Knowledge of the Holy: The Attributes of God, Their Meaning in the Christian Life* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1961), 1.

¹⁴ Ecclesiastes 3:11.

others. Simply having students keep their faith is not enough; teaching them how to disciple others is the end goal.

“Doing life” with others is a way of living. As stated earlier, the “Doing Life” curriculum is closely aligned with biblical teachings on discipleship and fellowship within the body of Christ. In “doing life” with people, it is important to keep the developmental process of those you are mentoring in mind. As I mentor others, I examine whether things are going well by the progress and outcome of the relationship. If a one-on-one relationship has a positive impact on your life and the life of the one who is being mentored, then that is a good indicator things are going well. I do not believe we will see the end result in all of our relationships. Rather, “Doing Life” is more about walking with another person, as we walk together with Christ. When we walk with students, we must consider if we have the answers to vital questions that will help us along the way in guiding them. Here are a list of questions I believe all leaders must have the answers to as it pertains to each students in their ministry:

- How relevant is church to your life?
- To what degree do you believe that God exists?
- How often do you doubt the existence of God?
- How regularly do you attend youth group/church?
- How often is a close peer attending youth group/church?
- How often are you inviting a close peer to attend youth group/church?
- How often do you feel loved within a church or youth group community?
- How important is it that your friends practice Christianity?
- How important is it to have friend who attends youth group or church?
- How important is it to have snacks/food at youth group?

- How important is it to play games and have activities in youth group
- How important is it that the sermon is relevant to your life?
- How important is it to continue practicing Christianity in your young adult years?
- How important is it or would it be to maintain relationships established through faith as you grow older?

I believe it is imperative that all leaders, pastors, and mentors understand the answers to these questions. This does not mean that you need to sit your student down and pointedly ask these questions. Rather, by connecting with your students, you should be able to learn the answers to these questions. This can help in many ways and assist in understanding the maturity level of your student, making it possible to determine what type of leadership that particular student needs.

Looking Forward

It is my prayer that Christians around the world will start “doing life” with one another. I can only imagine what the world would be like if true and authentic Christians were to “do life” with non-believers. As I grow in the Lord, it is my hope that Jesus Christ will continue to fuel my own passion of ministry, and that I will be a light in a world of darkness by “doing life” with my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ.

As you begin to read this thesis, whether you serve as a youth pastor, mentor, or role model, I invite you to reflect on how you have already practiced this theory of “doing life.” How have you connected with someone in your family, friend group, or church, with whom you feel you have made an impact? This thesis can help in assisting how you can make those connections stronger and long-lasting. Creating long-lasting

connections can have an immense impact on a young student in the practice of their faith and their belief in God. This student discipleship curriculum can not only teach how to make connections stronger, but also guide in creating new connections within a student ministry, and throughout life. This is also a way for mentors and leaders to become better in their roles by connecting with students and directing them to have a stronger faith within Christ.

This curriculum can be a pathway on how to strengthen your connections, to create long-lasting friendships, and to reassure a student's faith in Christ. As the 21st century technology is ever-changing, we must keep up with our students who are on the same path. As they grow, we need to make sure they are growing in the right direction. Belief and faith come at different times, and they are challenged almost every day. As Alex Chediak writes, "A Christianity not practiced today becomes a Christianity that is absent tomorrow."¹⁵ As mentors and leaders, we need to make sure that these challenges, and the changes students experience as they mature, do not scare them away from what can be a lifetime connection with Christ.

¹⁵ Alex Chediak, *Thriving at College: Make Great Friends, Keep Your Faith, and Get Ready for the Real World* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2011), 3.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The term “Christian” is only used three times in the New Testament. On the other hand, “disciple” is used over 250 times. God not only calls us to be Christians, he calls us to be disciples. Moreover, we are called to disciple others. “Doing Life” with others is more than just being a Christian, it is a continuous process of being transformed into become one of God’s disciples. Paul said “And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.”¹

In Luke 5, Jesus calls his first disciples. Perhaps, no better approach could be made for developing a student ministry instructional manual on discipleship than to look back at its meaning and how the Jewish culture and Hebrew Scriptures have shaped how discipleship is understood.

With Luke’s gospel as the backdrop for the calling of Jesus’ first disciples, and for the purpose of this thesis-project, Luke 5:1-11 provides the biblical and theological foundation for “Doing Life” and for discipleship. Jesus uses the everyday issues of life as a way to call people to follow him. In doing life, Jesus taught others how to live. In his everyday life, he called his disciples to live out the ways of the gospel. Jesus gathered twelve disciples around him to do life. Perhaps, Jesus was re-establishing Jewish social identity based upon discipleship that had taken place in early Judaism.

¹ 2 Corinthians 3:18.

Biblical Revelations of Discipleship

This thesis will focus on Luke 5:1-11 as the scope of Scripture for this discipleship curriculum. However, it is importance to know biblical revelations of obedience to God in following him in all ways, seeking to observe his commandments, and seeking him in all of life. A common thread of seeking after God is present throughout Scripture. Moses said, “But from there you will seek the Lord your God and you will find him, if you search after with all your heart and with all your soul.”²

Adam and Eve’s Disobedience

Adam and Eve are the ancestors of humanity, who were disobedient to God’s command. They are described as being the first persons God created, and they produced the first offspring.³ The Genesis narrative shows the development of humanity from Adam and Eve, and because of their initial rebellion, sin continues to be handed down from one generation to the next. The biblical writers use the story of Adam and Eve as a symbolic example of the history of God’s original disciples to show the tragic story of our ancestral parents’ fall from grace. The first record of sinful rebellion in the Bible is found in the narrative of Genesis 3:1-13. Although one can argue the serpent deceived them, they made their own choice to disobey God. The punishment for their action was being driven from the garden;⁴ yet, in the middle of their disobedience, God

² Deuteronomy 4:29.

³ Genesis 4:1-2, 25.

⁴ Genesis 3:22-24.

extended mercy that allowed for the opportunity of redemption for all who obey his command and become his disciple.

Abraham's Obedience and Covenant

There were about sixty-six generations from Adam to Christ, and we read that the population at the time of Abraham was approximately 250 million.⁵ God's objective was to bless all families through Abraham. God tested Abraham's faith and obedience on Mount Moriah when he was commanded to sacrifice Isaac, and he provided an alternative sacrifice, saving Isaac's life and once again assuring that the covenant he made with Abraham was intact. As a reward for Abraham's faithfulness, God renewed the covenant promise of great blessing and the growth of a mighty nation to father and son.

Moses and the Mosaic Covenant

The Bible depicts Moses as the leader of the Israelites during their Exodus from Egyptian slavery and oppression. He led them during their journey through the wilderness with its treaties in the form of hunger, thirst, and unpredictable enemies. It was also Moses who led them to their audience with God at Mount Sinai/Horeb where the distinctive covenant bonding Israel and God in a special treaty became a reality.⁶

⁵ Genesis 11:10; Luke 3.

⁶ George Coats, "Book of Moses," *Holman Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville: TN: Holman, 1991) 989-990.

The narrative of Moses' life found in Exodus 1 through Deuteronomy 34 begins with an account of the events in Egypt that affected Moses and the entire Israelites. Moses' encounter with God at the burning bush made him the leader among his people. God revealed himself to Moses with, "I am who I am."⁷ God himself disciplined Moses, and he promised to be with Moses during this special commission. Moses was commissioned to initiate events that would lead to Israel's exodus from Egypt and slavery. Exodus 17:8-13 shows that Moses was faithful in the execution of his leadership responsibilities, and Numbers 12:1-16 shows Moses as meek, loyal and faithful to God. Although the death of Moses is marked by tragedy, because God denied Moses entry to the Promise Land due to his sin,⁸ God's presence was still with Moses until his death.⁹

The Mosaic Covenant God made with the Israelites on Mount Sinai shows that God is faithful to his people and to the people faithful to their God.¹⁰ The Mosaic Covenant reminded the Israelites of their obligation to be obedient and to follow his commands. The biblical narrative suggests this could be considered a form of discipleship when the Israelites agreed to the covenant, saying, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do."¹¹ In the New Testament, the Mosaic Covenant is referred to as the

⁷ Exodus 3:14.

⁸ Numbers 7.

⁹ Numbers 20.

¹⁰ Exodus 19-24.

¹¹ Exodus 19:8.

Old Covenant,¹² being replaced by the New Covenant in Christ.¹³ The New Covenant fulfilled the promises made in Jeremiah 31:31-34. After Moses, numerous other Old Testament leaders, from Joshua to the kings, were disciplined by God to lead his people.

Throughout the New Testament, the prophets warned people about the consequences of disobedience, and they commanded Israel to obey God. The *Holman Bible Dictionary* describes obedience as, "To hear or to listen in a state of submission."¹⁴ The Bible views disobedience as a failure to hear and to do God's Word.¹⁵ We saw this with the Israelites who failed to hear or to listen to God,¹⁶ and Jesus warned, "He that has ears to hear, let him hear."¹⁷ To be obedient is to trust God and to respond to God's Word in faith. Paul urged the people of Corinth to, "Follow me as I follow Christ."¹⁸

Our relationships with God and with others are negatively affected if we become disobedient to Christ. For example, the Bible speaks of obedience of the wife to the husband,¹⁹ of children to their parents,²⁰ of slaves to masters,²¹ of parishioners to

¹² 2 Corinthians 3:14; Hebrews 8:6, 13.

¹³ Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6; Hebrews 8:8; 8:13; 9:15; 12:24.

¹⁴ Gary Hardin, "Obedience," *Holman Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville: TN: Holman, 1991) 1036.

¹⁵ Psalm 81:11.

¹⁶ Jeremiah 7:13; Hosea 9:1.

¹⁷ Matthew 11:15.

¹⁸ 1 Corinthians 11:1.

¹⁹ Ephesians 5:22.

²⁰ Ephesians 6:1.

²¹ Colossians 3:22.

church leaders,²² and Christians to persons in authority.²³ Our obedience to God and to those who have authority over us is an act of worship.²⁴ Obedience of faith brings about salvation,²⁵ secures God's blessings,²⁶ and produces the fruit of faith.²⁷

In Matthew 16:24, Jesus said, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me." Obedience is a necessary requirement in being Jesus' disciple. Authentic obedience imitates Christ's love, humility and character. Since true obedience follows Christ, to be disobedient is to reject Christ. Adam's disobedience stood in contrast to what it means to be a disciple of Christ.²⁸ There appears to be a direct correlation in the New Testament, particularly in Paul's letters, that a disobedient heart does not trust God. In order to be a disciple of the Lord, one must be obedient and trust the Lord. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight."

²² 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13.

²³ 1 Peter 2:13-14.

²⁴ 1 Samuel 15:22; John 4:23-24.

²⁵ Romans 1:5; 10:16-17.

²⁶ John 14:23; 1 John 2:17.

²⁷ James 2:21-26.

²⁸ Romans 5:12-13.

Discipleship and New Testament Judaism

In Judaism, the term “disciple” refers to one who is committed to the interpretations of Scripture and religious tradition given by a master or rabbi. The term is derived from the Latin root *discipulus* which means, “to be a learner, student, and apprentice.”²⁹ The phrase, “doing life,” may be narrowly understood in terms of the historical view of discipleship when a rabbi “did life” with his students. Luke 5:1-11 shows how the Christian experience of doing life is how Jesus wants his disciples to be and how he wants them to disciple others.

Jewish disciples followed their master around, often perfectly imitating them. Jewish disciples worked to become masters, or rabbis, and to have their own disciples who followed them.³⁰ In some respects, this practice still continues. Doctoral students search for and apply to doctoral schools to study a specific discipline under a scholar who is well known and highly regarded for their academic work. In Judaism, Jesus was a person who called, or invited, his disciples. Although discipleship was a voluntary matter of the first century, Jesus initiated discipleship relationships with a call.³¹

In Judaism, the study of the Torah was important as it revealed the revelation of the Messiah. The Torah, the rule and guide of life, was influential in the lives of the Jews. Consequently, its study was the paramount duty of the Jews, and its study was

²⁹ Trent Butler, “Disciple,” *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992), 367.

³⁰ Butler, “Disciple,” 367.

³¹ Mark 1:17; 2:14; Matthew 4:19; 9:9; cf. Luke 5:10-11, 27, 28. M.J. Wilkins, “Discipleship,” *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1992) 182-189.

raised to the status of an important religious obligation of all Jewish males. In Deuteronomy 11:13, the words are written, "to love the Lord your God and to serve Him", and "to serve" is the study of the Torah.³² Rabbis were devoted to the study of the Torah and its implication for the spiritual life. A fundamental issue for rabbis was the acceptance of a traditional Torah, transmitted from one generation to another by word of mouth, side by side, with the written text. It is said that the oral Torah, equally with the written Torah, goes back to the revelation on Mount Sinai, if not in detail, at least in principle.³³

The reason for considering the history of the Torah and rabbis is because the rabbis disciplined their students based on the Torah. For Jews, the Torah was more than a creed or a body of teaching; it was the guide for life, in every way. The Torah provides the daily spiritual sustenance of whoever cared to avail to it.³⁴

In Rob Bell's spiritual formation DVD, "Dust 008," he discusses the process of what it means to be disciplined by a rabbi, and how Jesus changed the way of discipleship. His video paints an authentic picture of the way this author "does life" with people. He discusses why the disciples were so quick to follow Jesus and to leave fishing behind, why Peter was so eager to walk on water, and what it means to be "covered in the dust of your rabbi." Bell says that disciples can impact others as disciples if they live their

³² Daniel C. Browning, "Torah," *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992) 1359.

³³ Wilkins, "Discipleship," 146.

³⁴ Wilkins, "Discipleship," 149.

lives as reflections of Jesus Christ.³⁵ The rabbi gathered students around them and taught the Law. They would interpret what it meant for their students. This was done through a process of interpreting what it means to follow the Law.

The term for this set of standards of rules and regulations was called “a yoke.” Desiring to be a disciple, the followers would take that yoke upon themselves.³⁶ For this reason, Jewish boys would be trained in and would memorize the Old Testament. The students would be evaluated at different ages to see if they would “make the cut.” At age 12 or 13, the “best of the best” would be selected to live as the rabbi lived. Different rabbis had different sets of interpretations about how they understood, interpreted, and lived out the Scriptures. This is why the rabbi’s process of picking a student was so selective. The rabbi only chose the ones he thought could live out the law. In Matthew 11: 28-30, Jesus invites us to do the same thing. Jesus invites all who are weary and heavy-laden to rest in Him. He said, “Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls....For my yoke is easy, and my load is light.” Jesus’ invitation to follow him, and to take his yoke is open to all. He does not require us to be the best of the best. Jesus demonstrated this in his calling of the first disciples in Luke 5:1-11.

³⁵ Rob Bell, *Nooma: Dust 008*. DVD, (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005).

³⁶ Trent Butler, “Yoke,” *Holman Bible Dictionary* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1992), 1430.

Discipleship in the New Testament Narratives

Before examining Luke 5:1-11, it is important to note that an understanding of discipleship requires taking into account the literary usage of speech in both Luke and Acts. It also requires a comparison of Luke's gospel with the other synoptic gospels.³⁷ A greater discussion of available literature follows in chapter 3, but this is meant to provide a more in-depth background to the biblical foundation of this passage. In Acts, the term "disciple" is used as a synonym for "believers in Christ."³⁸ This suggests that a disciple was anyone who confessed Jesus as the Messiah. The usage in Luke's gospel foreshadows this use in Acts.³⁹

Matthew, Mark, and Luke share strong similarities and content. For example, some of the similarities include:

1. The accounts of the calling of Jesus' first disciples;⁴⁰
2. Jesus sending out not only the Twelve, but also the Seventy;⁴¹
3. The scandal of Peter's denial being somewhat tempered by Jesus' prayer for Peter, and the hint of his future role of strengthening the other disciples.⁴²

³⁷ Kurt Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels* (Stuttgart, Germany: UBS, 1982).

³⁸ 6:1 2,7; 9:10, 26;11:26;14:21-22;15;10;16:1. Cf. "believers," 4:32; "disciple," 6:2.

³⁹ Luke 6:13; 8:9; 9:54; 10:23; 11:1; 14:26; 19:37, 39.

⁴⁰ Luke 5:1-11; Mark 2:16-18; Matthew 4:18-22.

⁴¹ Luke 9:1-39; Mark 6:6-13; Matthew 10:5-15; 10:1-16.

⁴² Wilkins, "Discipleship." 22:31-32.

The latter is mentioned because (Simon) Peter is the feature character in Luke's account, and of the primary passage of this paper.

Following Jesus is synonymous with discipleship, but Luke depicts the phenomenon in a unique way, as seen in his account of the miracle story about the fish. This passage could be considered a periscope miracle story and a passive narrative because catching an unusual amount of fish in the Sea of Galilee was rare.⁴³ Jesus' ministry of calling, training, and sending out disciples stands as a captivating historical phenomenon. There are many layers that can be explored and uncovered in discipleship. For the purposes of this thesis, the biblical and theological foundation focuses on the training aspect that involves doing life with students. As stated earlier, if being a disciple is to become like one's masters, then students will become like their leader, parent and mentors through their teachings.

During Jesus' early ministry, the disciple was to "follow" Jesus. Pledging an allegiance to Jesus was a decisive act that could demonstrate a literal or figurative attachment.⁴⁴ Jesus not only ministered through his healing, parables, and sayings, but he also did so by the way he did life. Throughout Jesus' ministry, he rebuked both the Pharisees and the disciples. For example, Luke notes that Jesus rebuked unbelief,⁴⁵ rebuked the unclean Spirit,⁴⁶ rebuked the disciples' inability to understand Jesus' coming

⁴³ James L. Bailey, *Literary Forms in the New Testament*, (Louisville, KY: Presbyterian Publishing, 1992).

⁴⁴ Wilkins, "Discipleship."

⁴⁵ Luke 9:37-41a.

⁴⁶ Luke 9:41b-43.

betrayal,⁴⁷ rebuked pride in the disciples,⁴⁸ rebuked intolerance in the disciples,⁴⁹ and rebuked racial bigotry in the Disciples.⁵⁰ Jesus used his life as a way to demonstrate the ways of the Lord and to model effective discipleship. However, despite the many times Jesus rebuked the disciples, they were still invited to be disciples. In Luke 5:1-11, Jesus called the first disciples because, unlike the Sectarians within Judaism, Jesus continually tried to break through the barriers of inclusivity as he summoned the fishermen.

Luke 5:1-11 as a Framework for Discipleship

In Luke 5:1-11, the calling of the disciples is significantly more than a mere reworking of Mark 1:16-20, despite the reuse of some of the details. Luke first introduces Jesus and the crowd surrounding Jesus in his account of the fisherman. The immediate context of Luke reveals that he introduces the first disciples immediately after the twofold presentation of the Messiah.⁵¹ Acts 1:21-22 suggests that Luke bases the office of apostle on the fact that these individuals followed the Lord from the beginning.⁵² Therefore, Luke 5 is actually a reworking of Mark 4. Mark 4:1-2 and 4:16-20 help Luke compose an introductory setting: Jesus boards a boat as a successful

⁴⁷ Luke 9:44-45.

⁴⁸ Luke 9:46-48.

⁴⁹ Luke 9:49-50.

⁵⁰ Luke 9:51-56.

⁵¹ Luke 4:16-30; 4:31-44. Francois Bovon, *Luke: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 1:1-9:50* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 2002).

⁵² See page 8.

teacher.⁵³ So, the “frame” of Luke 5:1-11 is formed both artificially and artfully from elements of the Gospel of Mark.⁵⁴

Both accounts have important structural elements. They have in common the juxtaposition of Jesus and Simon; the first, unsuccessful fishing expedition; Jesus’ command to undertake a new attempt; the trusting obedience of the fishermen; the miraculous catch of fish; a gesture from Simon expressing his faith; and probably a prophecy.⁵⁵ All accounts in the Luke seem to emphasize the importance of discipleship.

In 5:1-11, Luke opens this scene with Jesus closely followed by a crowd. This section of Luke presents a symmetrical arrangement, which may be intentional.⁵⁶ The call of a leading disciple is followed by two healings that provoke controversy.⁵⁷ Then, the call of another leading disciple is followed by two incidents on the Sabbath, which again provokes controversy.⁵⁸ In 5:1-11, Luke focuses on Jesus’ call to Simon. In Mark 1:16-20, the narrative includes the call of Simon, Andrew, James and John. In Luke’s narrative, Andrew is omitted, but everyone obeys the call.

⁵³ Bovon, *Luke*.

⁵⁴ Bovon, *Luke*.

⁵⁵ Bovon, *Luke*.

⁵⁶ Alfred Plummer, *The Gospel According to St. Luke: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary* (Edinburgh, Scotland: Clark Publishers, 1999).

⁵⁷ Luke 5:1-26.

⁵⁸ Luke 5:27-6:11.

Luke 5:1-11 is an elaborate pronouncement story centered around 5:10.⁵⁹ However, there is good reason to suspect a complex source history for the account: the crowd and the fishermen are juxtaposed, but not really related. There is a curious movement between the singular and plural forms of the verbs in the account.⁶⁰ The mention of the sons of Zebedee is not integrated well, and the fishing miracle is quite similar to that reported in John 21. While the call to catch men is evidently related to the call in Mark 1:17 to become fishermen of men. It has frequently been suspected that 5:8 was originally a shore setting.⁶¹

In the narrative of Luke, the opening scene begins with the crowd pressing around Jesus. This could explain why he ended up getting into the boat with Peter, asking him to take him out to sea. After the introduction of the crowd, Luke allows Jesus to enter the scene. This is an example of redaction criticism: "Redaction Criticism is the study of editorial activity. A redactor is simply an editor who shapes the material he has received for a purpose."⁶² Sometimes, the purpose of the redactor is in harmony with the author, and sometimes it is not.

Everything begins with Jesus in verse 2 with the "glance of Jesus," just as it is decisive at the beginning of the two calls to discipleship in Mark 1:16, 19. The "he got

⁵⁹ Bailey, *Literary Forms*, 562.

⁶⁰ Luke 5:4, 5, 10, 11.

⁶¹ Thomas Nelson, *Luke 1:1-9:20*, WBC (Waco, TX: Nelson, 1989), 520.

⁶² Bailey, *Literary Forms*, 562.

in” creates the possibility for Jesus to express his request.⁶³ In Luke’s time and place, Jesus’ request could only be understood as a command. Baily views this as important because it gives clarity to Jesus being allowed in the boat. For example, Jesus’ seated position is doubly appropriate. It’s theologically appropriate because it is the position of a teacher, and one can only remain in a boat for an extended period of time if in a seated position.⁶⁴

In verses 4-5, Jesus dialogues with Simon. In verse 4, Jesus’ sermon is finished. The narrator omitted the sermon Jesus gave to the crowd sitting on the shore. Perhaps, this was due to the need of showing a miracle and a prophecy that resulted in discipleship. The scene returns to Simon after the sermon. Simon was already polite and cooperative in the boat. Jesus admonishes the fishermen in 5:3-4 to, “let down your nets...for a catch.” Simon Peter was catching fish, and Jesus was catching Peter. Bovon noted that Peter answered with hesitation. On one hand, Peter answered like a fisherman; on the other, he answered like a disciple. Perhaps, because Peter was a fisherman, he may have thought he had nothing to learn from Jesus who had spent all his time on land. “Doing Life” with people, and in community, means learning from one another, regardless of a person’s occupation.

Fishermen from the Mediterranean help us to see the vivid scene in verses 6-7.⁶⁵ The nets not only catch the fish, but encloses them. This demonstrates a particular kind

⁶³ Luke 5:3.

⁶⁴ Bailey, *Literary Forms*, 169.

⁶⁵ Roland De Vaux, *Ancient Israel: Its Life and Institutions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 164.

of fishing. The fish are surrounded on all sides of the boat to prevent loss of fish or damage to the nets. If the nets were too full, the nets would be in danger of breaking. A “calling over” would lessen the catch of fish or even cause it to fail, since the fish hear the danger. When Simon realized this, they left the circle of the full nets in the water and waited for the second boat. The narrative states that James and John manned the second boat. The catch is so large that both boats almost sink. This, according to Bovon, is an attest that a description of the depth of the sea threatens the believers.⁶⁶

When Simon becomes conscious of the success of his expedition, he throws himself down before Jesus. This appears in verses 8-11. “The glance of the Lord (5:2) organizes the church; the glance of the believer launches a confession.”⁶⁷ Simon’s reaction, like that of Jesus in 4:39, is simultaneously verbal and nonverbal. Simon’s reaction corresponds to the Hebrew Bible theophany: one cannot see God without dying.⁶⁸

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in *The Cost of Discipleship*, said “When Christ calls a man, He bids him come and die. It may be a death like that of the first disciples who had to leave home and work to follow Him, or it may be a death like Luther’s, who had to leave the monastery and go out into the world. But it is the same death every time—death in Jesus Christ, the death of the old man at His call.”⁶⁹ Following Jesus is difficult. This is

⁶⁶ Bovon, *Luke*, 170.

⁶⁷ Bovon, *Luke*, 170.

⁶⁸ Genesis 32:30; Exodus 33:20

⁶⁹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, (London, UK: SCM, 1959), 99.

why we have parables and sayings of Jesus throughout the Gospel that warn us to count the cost of discipleship. For this purpose, we are not called to be disciples alone. We are not called to do life alone. We are called to make disciples among us and to do life together as a community.

When Simon Peter acknowledged the Lord on the boat, the story concluded his revelation with a comment in the form of a prophecy or a promise. “From now on you will be catching people alone.”⁷⁰ The disciples left everything and followed Jesus. This story shows how the catch of fish and the responsibility of proclaiming God’s word are important and vital. The example of Jesus preaching from a ship helps one see the connection of going out and doing life with people. It sharpens one’s understanding of connecting with others on their level and in their lifestyle. Jesus is the first fisher of people, and he teaches his disciples to catch more. Bovon ends his commentary with the conclusion that this story is metaphoric. However, the miracle serves as a parable and points to the proclamation of God’s Word. In short, this author’s philosophy of ministry is to catch men, do life with them, and teach them how to catch more fish for Christ.

“Doing Life” and the Church

One of the key roles of the church is for believers to come together to give corporate praise and worship to God. In doing so, we edify the body of Christ. All believers who come to the church are equipped with individual spiritual gifts for the

⁷⁰ Luke 5:10.

purpose of ministering to one another. God calls us to come together, for worship, praise, and community for the purpose of building up the body of Christ. Paul notes in Romans 12:3-5:

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Another key role of the church is to cultivate believers, teaching them how to utilize their spiritual gifts for the glory of God and how to live as Christian's believers to impact the world for Christ. According to Paul, as the church represents the body of Christ, we as members must work together in order for the church to function.⁷¹ By doing so, we disciple others.

This chapter explains some convictions with regard to the role of the church in present day society. The third key role of the church is to shape and transform culture. Transforming culture is vital because it allows the church to effectively minister as a community, for the community, and in a community. In order to effectively minister, Christians must understand the cultural context in which they live. With this understanding, culture can be transformed through the effective ministering of Christians within the community. Thus, the church participates in the cultural transformation as the church serves people.

⁷¹ 1 Corinthians 12:4-8, 12, 27.

The church cannot minister effectively to anyone without the guidance of the Holy Spirit and without mutual accountability. When these are in place, the church is able to fellowship in love and truth for the glory of God.

The role of the church is to build the kingdom of God by fulfilling the great commission in Matthew 28:18-20. We are called to make disciples. In essence, we create disciples by “Doing Life” with others.

According to Daniel Migliore, in *Faith Seeking Understanding*, the New Testament’s role of the church encompasses “the new community of believers gathered to praise and serve God in the power of the Holy Spirit in response to the gospel of the ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”⁷² The purpose of the church is for believers to gather for communal worship and for the edification of the individual gifts each believer has been assigned and called to within the greater body of Christ.

Throughout the New Testament there are a variety of images that describes the church and her role. In *Images of the Church in the New Testament*, Paul Miner describes images of the church and how they relate to the role of the church.⁷³ For example, the church is described as “the body of Christ,”⁷⁴ “the salt of the earth,”⁷⁵

⁷² Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding: An Introduction to Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 248-49.

⁷³ Paul Minear, *Images of the Church in the New Testament* (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1996).

⁷⁴ 1 Corinthians 3:9.

⁷⁵ Matthew 5:13.

“fishers for people,”⁷⁶ and “the household of God.”⁷⁷ These descriptions describe the role of the church as light in a dark world, hope in a lost world, and God’s redeeming love for the people in the world.

Thomas Oden says the church is “the act of assembling or the assemblage of persons brought together by God’s own calling for the purpose of hearing the gospel and sitting at table with the living Lord.”⁷⁸ Oden’s view of the church describes how God calls us together to be present with him and with one another. In Ephesians 2:19 and Colossians 1:18b, the church is referred to as the “Household.” The church represents both believers worldwide and particular groups of believers gathered in local places.⁷⁹ It is important that the role of the church is clear to believers as we represent Christ to the world. We live in a world that is always changing with the culture. If the role of the church becomes blurred we risk conforming to the ways of the world. Unfortunately, this is a situation for some churches already.

Churches in today’s society have conformed to what is popular in the world. In many of the different denominations in which this author has worked, it has been his experience that culture influences the role of the church. Some churches have allowed culture to change it, instead of the other way around. For example, pastors use to encourage people to memorize Scripture, to learn the books of the Bible, and to bring

⁷⁶ Mark 1:17.

⁷⁷ Ephesians 2:19.

⁷⁸ Thomas C. Oden, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3, *Life in the Spirit* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1992).

⁷⁹ Don Thosen, *Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit and the Church* (Class Lecture, Azusa Pacific, January 2008).

their Bibles to church. With the ever-changing culture we live in, the role of technology has influenced the use of biblical verses on wide screens and reading Scripture from an iPhone, or another smart device. People no longer search for biblical meanings in the index or cross-reference verses in the concordance. Some churches have stopped preaching the gospel and replaced theological views with political ones. Some spiritual leaders have turned pulpits into platforms for political pundits. One of the difficult challenges churches face is how to maintain their status as a unified body of believers and a pillar in the community without transforming itself to mirror society.

The Holy Spirit and Accountability in the Church

We must do all we can to build, cultivate, and restore people back to God's family. For God says in His word, "If anyone wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins."⁸⁰ This is our job, and it is the role of the church in the community. Part of the job of the church is to hold the community accountable.

An example of the development of community among believers is first identified in Acts. Believers were living in common—submitting all they had willing to support the Christian community. In Acts 5, we read Ananias and his wife Sapphira lied against the Holy Spirit in community. They were not honest or truthful; they were struck down.

⁸⁰ James 5:19-20.

Peter said that they had not lied to man, but to God. Their behavior affected the community and they were held accountable. Being in community means being in accountability with others, living in truth, and walking in the light. Ananias and Sapphira's actions were a direct contradiction of what it means to live in community. By selfishly withholding and lying, they grieved the Holy Spirit by their dishonesty. The discipline God imposed was immediate death. God was not angry because they wanted to keep a portion for themselves, he was angry because they lied.

The church must hold people accountable for their actions. In 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, we read an example of the need for excommunication in the church at Corinth. The church is the body of Christ and must remain a safe haven for sinners to come and find healing from sin. If the church allows sin to become permissible among our spiritual leaders, then we deceive ourselves and lead our flock astray.

1 Corinthians 5:6-7, Paul likens sin to a little yeast that works through the whole batch of dough. Paul says to expel the wicked man and hand him over to Satan. This shows that sometimes the role of the church is to rebuke those who are sinning in the church. God calls his church to be pure.⁸¹ This is why the church must hold our community accountable, and God calls us to be accountable to one another. This accountability can only take place with the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit.

The role of the Holy Spirit is vital to the church. John 4:24 states, "God is spirit." The English language uses at least three words to describe the Holy Spirit as "wind,"

⁸¹ Ephesians 5:25-27.

“breath,” and “spirit” in its translation of the single Hebrew term, *ruach*.⁸² Conceptually, *ruach* conveys both the power and the redemptive purpose of God.⁸³ As the body of Christ, we can do nothing without the empowerment of God’s Holy Spirit. It is God who empowers us to minister, live, and fellowship as the church. The Spirit is associated with life.⁸⁴ For example, when God created Adam, God breathed into him the breath of life, and as a result, he became a living being. Because God is the giver of life, through his Holy Spirit, we certainly need him to be the giver of life as we minister to a dying world.

The Spirit works through individuals (e.g., salvation, empowerment), through the church (e.g., evangelism, discernment, discipleship), and the world (e.g. providence, common grace, [Calvin], prevenient grace [Wesley]).⁸⁵ The Holy Spirit equips believers with the necessary tools to minister throughout our individual calling within the body of Christ. The Holy Spirit is considered the third person of the Trinity, fully divine and fully personal.⁸⁶ He works in us and through us for the glory of God.

⁸² Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, (Chicago, IL: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 235.

⁸³ Don Thosen, *Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit and the Church*, (Class Lecture, Azusa Pacific, January 2008).

⁸⁴ John 6:63; Acts 17:28.

⁸⁵ Don Thosen, *Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit and the Church*, (Class Lecture, Azusa Pacific, January 2008).

⁸⁶ McGrath, *Christian Theology*, 236.

The Holy Spirit is described as the teacher of truth,⁸⁷ a counselor,⁸⁸ regenerator,⁸⁹ and reclamer.⁹⁰ It is the Holy Spirit who discerns our hearts and allows the gospel to penetrate the hearts of believers. He that convicts us of our sins. Without God's Spirit, we would be lost. It is the church's role to baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As children of God, the Holy Spirit follows us, dwells in us, and protects from the evil in the world. We are instructed to, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood."⁹¹

The Holy Spirit makes it possible for us to have fellowship with other believers. One of the biblical images of the church is that of the household and family.⁹² The Holy Spirit unites us to have fellowship with one another as this is one of the vital parts of church life. Moltmann writes, "The gift and the presence of the Holy Spirit is the greatest and most wonderful thing which we can experience—we the human community, all living things, this earth and ourselves."⁹³ Within that communal fellowship with the Holy Spirit, we are able to eat, drink, and be in community with one

⁸⁷ John 14:17.

⁸⁸ Ephesians 1:17.

⁸⁹ Romans 8:2.

⁹⁰ Romans 8:15.

⁹¹ Acts 20:28.

⁹² Galatians 6:10.

⁹³ Jurgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of Life*, (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1997), 10.

another. Within this community, the Holy Spirit enables us to feel conviction of our sins and have life changing experiences as we confess our sins to one another. This type of compassion for one another can only be the result of God's Spirit dwelling in the midst of such a fellowship.

The Holy Spirit allows the church to have fellowship with the Father. Moltmann notes, "For the Holy Spirit is the source of life and brings life into the world—whole life, full life, unhindered, indestructible, and everlasting life."⁹⁴ When God created us, he created us with his Holy Spirit so that we may have life. Our source to minister life to the broken world comes from the Holy Spirit. He gives life to the church in order for the church to operate and function as God's body. He is working in the hearts of all believers as we minister in our respective fields. It was the Holy Spirit that worked in the life of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ was Spirit because he lived a Spirit-filled life.⁹⁵

In the New Testament, Easter (the work of Christ) and Pentecost (the outpouring of the Spirit) points to the church a group of believers working closely together in communion with the Spirit.⁹⁶ Within this ministry of the church, the Holy Spirit transforms people into holiness,⁹⁷ calls believers to service and ministry,⁹⁸ and most

⁹⁴ Moltmann, *Source of Life*, 19.

⁹⁵ Matthew 4:1; 12:28; Mark 1:10; Luke 2:27; 4:1, 14, 18. Oden, *Life in the Spirit*, 347.

⁹⁶ Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2002), 108-109.

⁹⁷ 2 Corinthians 3:18; Galatians 5:16-25.

⁹⁸ Acts 8:29; 13:2; 16:6-10.

importantly, creates community by uniting believers and mediating fellowship.⁹⁹ The church can “do life” because the Holy Spirit has called believers to disciple people, teaching them to live in community with each other by ministering in our everyday life.

Conclusion

Jesus commanded us to make disciples. In Matthew 28:18-19, Jesus delegates authority to his disciples: "And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, ‘All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.’" This could be considered one of the most crucial statements Jesus ever made. Throughout Scripture, Jesus was given authority to forgive sins,¹⁰⁰ to mediate to the Father,¹⁰¹ to send the Holy Spirit,¹⁰² to open the hearts and minds of His people,¹⁰³ to reveal the Father,¹⁰⁴ to give eternal life to whom He chooses,¹⁰⁵ and to raise us up on the last day.¹⁰⁶ Jesus has now given the church authority through his Holy Spirit. We are called, as the body of Christ, to make disciples and to hold each other accountable in love.

⁹⁹ Romans 5:5; 8:23; 2 Corinthians 5:5; Ephesians 1:14; 2:18; 4:30. Don Thosen, “Jesus Christ, Holy Spirit and the Church,” (Class Lecture, Azusa Pacific, January 2008).

¹⁰⁰ Luke 5:20; 7: 5-48.

¹⁰¹ 1 Timothy 2

¹⁰² John 14:26; 15:26.

¹⁰³ Luke 24:45.

¹⁰⁴ Matthew 11:27; Luke 10:22.

¹⁰⁵ John 10:27-28.

¹⁰⁶ John 6:40.

Richard Foster said it best, “In our day heaven and earth are on tiptoe waiting for the emergence of a Spirit-led, Spirit-intoxicated, Spirit-empowered people.”¹⁰⁷ The church must be the place where healing and new life takes place. Broken hearts, lost souls, and people with deep wounds must find the church to be a place of refuge from the world. This is why the church must remain the Body of Christ, filled with God’s redemptive love, by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit to preach the transformation gospel to those who will believe. This philosophy of ministry shapes the theological view that the Holy Spirit is leading us to “do life” with others through community. Chapter three will discuss other literature that has examined this approach of doing life with students, both in context and methodology.

¹⁰⁷ Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (San Francisco, CA: Harper, 1998), 175.

CHAPTER THREE

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Reason for the Study

A search on Google.com on discipleship in college reveals different results ranging from books, a theology of discipleship to applying to a Christian College.¹ Only a few books address the epidemic of students entering college and losing their faith. Surveys, statistics, and case studies show the percentage of young people leaving the church, but not necessarily on how to address it. Publications discuss “How to Build a Youth Ministry”, “How to Disciple,” and even “A Christ-Followers Guide for the Journey in College,” but nothing exists that streamlines and connects the essential steps that retains a college student within Christianity.

The scope of this literature review has three main themes. The first theme covers Christ and Culture. We live in a world where social media shapes culture. As a result, when the Church comes up against issues that are socially accepted in the current culture (i.e. gay marriage, legalize cannabis), the Church is left trying to figure out its role.

The second theme discusses youth ministry as the first foundation where relationships and community are established in a young person’s life. Youth ministry is all about relationships. A relationship provides an opportunity for discipleship. On the

¹ Google, accessed August 15, 2015, <https://www.google.com/#q=discipleship%20in%20college>.

other hand, evangelism without a relationship may not stick. Youth ministry can be filled with games, food, and outings, but without a clear discipleship model that leads teens to Christ, youth pastors are no more than glorified babysitters. Duffy Robbins, in *Building A Youth Ministry That Builds Disciples*, said, “61 percent of twenty-somethings who’d been church-ed during their teen years are now spiritually disengaged (i.e., not actively attending church, reading the Bible, or praying).”² What happens in youth ministry is directly tied to what tools they have to use in college.

The third theme discusses the importance of college students fostering their relationships with Christ during college by owning their own faith. Jonathan Morrow, in *Welcome to College: A Christ-Follower’s Guide for the Journey*, says up to the college years a student’s parents and youth pastors have probably played a significant role in sharpening their Christian convictions.³ Students learning to own their own faith in college is critical for them to cultivate an ongoing and healthy relationship with the Creator. Robbins notes, “Only 20 percent of these young adults maintain a level of spiritual activity in their twenties that is consistent with their involvement in high school.”⁴ This is a growing trend, and the reader should note that the recent statistics can be found in chapter 1 of this thesis.⁵

² Duffy Robbins, *Building A Ministry That Builds Disciples* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan 2011), 17.

³ Jonathan Morrow, *Welcome to College: A Christ-follower's Guide for the Journey* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel, 2008), 22.

⁴ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 17.

⁵ Scott McConnell, “Lifeway Research Finds Reasons 18- to 22-Year-Olds Drop Out of Church,” *Lifeway*, posted August 7, 2007, accessed August 15, 2015, <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/LifeWay-Research-finds-reasons-18-to-22-year-olds-drop-out-of-church>.

The literature used in this chapter represents work done in the field of youth ministry within the last 5 years. The focus is on literature that has effectively addressed youth ministry with the hope of creating an instructional discipleship guide in the next chapter.

The Church and Culture

H. Richard Niebuhr examines the relationship between Christ and culture in *Christ and Culture*. According to Niebuhr, a tension exists between Christ, his character, and the demands of culture. If Christ is the head of the church, and we are the body, then we are to be the leading role of the church in culture. Niebuhr describes five models of Christ and his role in culture: Christ against Culture, Christ of Culture, Christ above Culture, Christ and Culture Paradox, and Christ the Transformer of Culture.

This author's theological foundations and beliefs about ministry and the church are closely aligned with "Christ the Transformer of Culture." However, before providing explanations for this view, a brief explanation of the other four models is necessary.

Christ Against Culture

In "Christ against Culture," Niebuhr describes the belief that Christ is against culture. Niebuhr illustrates patterns in the church tradition for the radical juxtaposition of Christ and human cultural values.⁶ When the values of the church clash with the

⁶ Richard Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture* (New York, NY: Harper, 1951), 45-46.

ideologies of the culture, it appears as if Christ is totally against culture, as a whole.

Niebuhr believes it is necessary to oppose and separate ourselves from some aspects of culture in order to produce sincere followers of Christ. However, he adds that the church cannot escape culture, and given that Jesus Christ stands at the center of the conflict as victim and mediator, this is the characteristic of the church as a whole.⁷ The role of the church is not to be against culture, but to stand as the mediator, inviting the culture to see Christ as the savior. "For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him."⁸

Christ of Culture

In "Christ of Culture," Niebuhr describes Christ as affirming everything good in culture. This idea comes from Protestantism in the new age of Christianity.⁹ Supporters of this model, so-called cultural Christians, claim that Christ is to be understood as the highest aspiration and fulfillment of culture. In this way, it is possible to affirm both Christ and culture, while denying any necessary opposition between the two. This author's opinion is that this model of the church is the extreme opposite of "Christ against Culture." These two models seem to suggest that Christ is either totally against culture or totally for culture. Both models have their strengths and weaknesses; yet, these models do not accurately represent the role of the church.

⁷ Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 101.

⁸ John 3:17.

⁹ Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 83.

Christ Above Culture and Christ and Culture Paradox

“Christ above Culture” builds on the best of culture because it is not the best by itself. In this view, a Christian must be a good man in accordance with the standard of good culture in order for this model to be effective.¹⁰ “Christ and Culture Paradox” attempts to disguise versions of cultural accommodation into the rigorous gospel, and broaden the narrow way of life into an easy highway.¹¹ This model can be useful if kept within its proper bounds. It differs from the preceding one by maintaining that, while both Christ and culture claim their loyalty, the tension between them cannot be reconciled by any lasting synthesis. All of these models are feasible in their own right for the church, but they fail to get to the heart of the Gospel.

Christ Transforming Culture

The best model for the church is “Christ Transforming Culture.” In Romans, Paul writes, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”¹² As a church, believers must take a position of holiness, while still embracing reconciliation with non-believers. Miroslav Volf contends that if the healing word of the gospel is to reach the lost, then Christian theology must

¹⁰ Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 127.

¹¹ Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 149.

¹² Romans 12:2.

find ways of speaking that address the other.¹³ The church must allow people to “come as they are.” If they are hungry, let them come. If they are poor, let them come. Niebuhr argues,

Christ is concerned not with the specious external expects of human behavior in the first place, but that he tries the hearts and judges the subconscious life; that he deals with what is deepest and most fundamental in man. He heals the most stubborn and virulent human disease, the phthisis of the spirit, the sickness unto death, he forgives the most hidden and proliferous sin, the distrust, lovelessness, and hopelessness of man in his relation to God. And this he does not simply by offering ideas, counsel and law: but living with men in great humility.¹⁴

It is this author’s theological conviction that the church must not conform to others, but as nonbelievers come to Christ, the church must embrace them and nurture them as new babes in Christ.¹⁵ This view of transforming culture is paramount in understanding how youth workers should design their youth ministry. With a youth ministry model, that transforms non-Christians into disciples, youth workers begin the process of installing Christian principles into students for their journey in college.

Youth Ministry as the Foundation

There is no perfect youth ministry model. The purpose for this section of the paper is to provide an overview of the youth ministry’s role of discipleship, and the research that has been done thus far. Scripture does not speak to the subject of student

¹³ Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (New York, NY: Abingdon, 1996).

¹⁴ Niebuhr, *Christ and Culture*, 191.

¹⁵ 1 Peter 2:2.

ministry in the church; so, any stated opinions are based on trial and error, surveys, and personal convictions of youth pastors. Although no student ministry model is explicitly mentioned in the Bible, a theological mandate to disciple students in a way that will lead to a transformation of the heart and mind that will last beyond the college years exists.

There are many different types of models for student ministries. Many student ministries are comprised of a combination of a program, evangelism or discipleship model. There are various reasons why one model may be stronger given the demographics of the community. If the goal of student ministry is to build faith within students that lasts throughout college, the discipleship model based on Duffy Robbins book is recommend based on the research provided in this thesis. Robbins's strategy of discipleship is best described by the title of the book, *Building Youth Ministry That Builds Disciples*. Robbins is a Professor of Youth Ministry at Eastern University in St. Davids, Pennsylvania. Literature in this area of youth ministry is abundant; expand that literature to college ministry, and it is about half the amount written. Very few works have been published on the transition from youth ministry into college ministry. However, such books addressed later present methods and programs designed to keep college students in their faith.

The big idea of this thesis is to provide an instructional guide that puts the right tools in the hands of students. That tool is the Bible. Robbins explains it this way: "The central mandate of youth ministry is to be incarnational—to flesh out the Word of God to the students with whom we are working, to consistently, creatively, and obediently

live out the Word of God in their presence.”¹⁶ The primary way the Bible can be shared with youth is through relationships.

Even the Apostle Paul agreed in his letter to the Philippians:

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!¹⁷

In the same way, the disciples kept their faith (minus Judas) after Jesus ascended in to Heaven because of the relationships he cultivated with them throughout his journey. Just at youth pastors want to raise up college students in the way of the Lord, we cannot wait until the junior and senior years of high school to make an impress. The training for a life in Christ starts the moment a student enters the church. This is critical if there is any hope of reducing the number of students who fall from the faith during their transition into college.

A discipleship model of student ministry understands clearly that God’s word came alive through his son Jesus Christ. Robbins describes this as a ministry of being there. Robbins explains, “God understands that if we were ever going to comprehend his love for us, it would have to be done in a way that was up close and personal.”¹⁸ When youth workers become close and personal with students, it creates a connection.

¹⁶ Duffy Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 57.

¹⁷ Philippians 2:5-8.

¹⁸ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 59.

Students will most likely face temptations in college that they had not previously experienced on their journey. Because youth leaders cannot necessarily dedicate substantial time to college students, it is even more important that youth ministry is based on equipping students to live out the word of God. A discipleship model of youth ministry, stresses that students should remember the importance of reading, studying, and meditating on the Bible.

Robbins outlines three important aspects of a youth ministry discipleship model:

1. A discipleship model is all about relationships.¹⁹
2. A discipleship model has a plan or blueprint for the ministry.²⁰
3. A discipleship model builds faith, supplies tools, which last throughout ministry.²¹

Robbins states, “The incarnational youth worker is neither a peer nor a parent, but a priest-someone who will share like a peer and care like a parent (1 Thessalonians 2:7-12), but whose great desire is to bring a student into a closer relationship with Jesus”.²²

As important as it is for youth ministry to set the ground work for students to have a deeper relationship with Christ, Robbins advises against five potential pitfalls that leaders encounter with this model:

¹⁹ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 55.

²⁰ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 107.

²¹ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 195.

²² Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 66.

1. The temptation to be the “answer man” in the relationship.²³
2. Building a relationship with teenagers is not about “acting like a teenager.”²⁴
3. Building an –in-depth relationship with every student isn’t possible.²⁵
4. Don’t feel threatened because some students are more relatable than others.²⁶
5. Every conversation doesn’t have to be an in-depth proclamation of the gospel.²⁷

These pitfalls in a discipleship model can be avoided to achieve an authentic relationship that yields itself to discipleship.

In *The Cost of Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, “Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate...Happy are they who know that discipleship simply means the life which springs from grace, and that grace simply means discipleship.”²⁸ For Bonhoeffer, costly grace guided the life of Jesus’ first disciples and is evidenced by Peter leaving his fishing business with James, John and Andrew to follow Jesus.²⁹

The importance of researching models of youth ministry builds into the foundation of a student’s faith in college. The discipleship model builds relationships.

²³ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 67.

²⁴ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 67.

²⁵ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 67.

²⁶ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 68.

²⁷ Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry*, 69.

²⁸ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*, (New York, NY: Fuller, 1963), 44.

²⁹ Luke 5:11.

Although there are hundreds of youth ministry models, youth pastor guides, and strategies, without God's Word becoming flesh in the relationship, the faith does not stick. It is essential that a long-term approach is taken in youth ministry to help students own their faith now so that it will translate into a sustained relationship with Jesus later.

College Students: Owning Their Faith

There are guides and self-help books on how to remain moral throughout college, but not on how to remain faithful to Christ. Moving away from home, being around strangers, and embracing different experiences certainly challenges a young man or woman to make difficult choices. The three reference books in this section are meant to provide help in guiding students on how to enjoy their college experience, while still practicing their faith.

One of the three books, chosen as a reference guide, is *How to Stay Christian in College*. J. Budziszewski, the author of this interactive guide, emphasizes that the young student partakes in spreading the word of God to other students who may be struggling with embracing their new independent life on campus. Chances are that there will be many students who are not Christians on campus. Budziszewski states that it is a difficult task, but students who discuss their faith with nonbelievers and get involved with campus life, actually make their relationships stronger with God. While it is not an easy task to take these steps, Budziszewski reassures students that their prayer life is one of their greatest tools to discuss their faith with non-Christian friends. Students should pray for the opportunity, pray for the preparedness, pray for the discretion, and pray for

the words. A student can start having conversations about their faith if they are prepared for pushback and uneasiness. By students engaging in conversations about their own faith, it actively reinforces their own walk with Christ.

When a student is in college, they will be approached with many different myths of the world that may begin to challenge their own belief that God's word is truth. It is important to remember that if students believe they know the truth, then the other opinions that may arise will not matter as much. Although other opinions can cloud their judgment, it will not uproot their faith.

Students are raised to believe different things, and they will run into people from different belief systems and values during their time on a college campus. Students who struggle with their faith may find interacting with students of different religious and lifestyles difficult, perhaps even confusing. Budzisewski emphasizes that the deepest friendships are based on shared faith in the risen Lord. Friends who meet in college may not share the same belief system, but chances are they have other things in common. However, when struggling students of faith encounter behaviors that are potentially detrimental - drugs, sex and alcohol, to name a few - it could cause their whole belief system to shutdown entirely. It is important for students who struggle with their faith to stay away from these activities.

Budzisewski mentions four "don't" rules that are meant to help students stay away from these behaviors. "Don't argue, don't apologize, don't back down, and don't

get trapped.”³⁰ Although these sound rather simple, they are not easy to put into action. Peer pressure is very difficult to overcome and easy to surrender to. The issues mentioned in the previous paragraph (sex, drugs, alcohol), students’ could be given tools during their time in youth ministry if youth workers are equipped with the appropriate training. The last “don’t” rule could be considered the most important because struggling students should not put themselves in situations that will make them give into peer pressure. Students who put themselves in these situations can become even more disconnected from God. Even for students who have a strong relationship with Christ, it does not take much to break apart from their relationships with God, and for many, that can begin even before college.

New life chapters have different experiences, and new experiences require different tools that students need to succeed in college. Budziszewski recommends reminding a new college student that they need to remain faithful to God, and through his faith to influence other students to partake in that same love. Budziszewski’s guidelines help students to have a greater chance of surviving and thriving in college.

Alex Chediak, author of *Thriving in College*, compares and contrasts surviving and thriving; how they are related and how they are different. He states, “Whether you survive or thrive has everything to do with the worldview and character that you bring into college.”³¹ Chediak is a college professor and student mentor. He attempts to cover

³⁰ J. Budziszewski, *How to Stay Christian in College*, (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 1999), 61.

³¹ Alex Chediak, *Thriving at College: Make Great Friends, Keep Your Faith, and Get Ready for the Real World*, (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2011), 32.

the ten most common mistakes college student make, and how to avoid them. For the purpose of this thesis-project, only a couple of the most important common mistakes are discussed as they relate to faith and college ministry.

Chediak's book focuses more on the lifestyle of a student, encompassing work, relationships, activities, and personal maintenance. The life of a college student is hectic. In *Thriving at College*, Chediak dives deep into time management. A student deals with the everyday struggles of peer pressure, homework, entertainment, sex and many other ordeals that they may need to overcome; these challenges can make it difficult for a student to continue to practice his faith while in college. This guide helps a student understand that there is a time and place for recreation, work, and relationships, but to never get too involved in one, while forgetting the others. In order for a student to succeed in college, he needs to approach this new part of life with character.

It is important to remember that attending college requires amazing responsibility. No one else is managing the student's daily activities. When students live at home with their parents, they do not necessarily have to take responsibility for making breakfast, doing laundry, cooking dinner, or even making it to school. College is an extreme wake-up call for most students. Chediak recommends this is the student's chance to take responsibility and command of her life. The ability to take on responsibility speaks a lot about a student's character.

Chediak poses the question, “How can maturity be measured?” Maturity is part of a student’s ability to process and develop. His answer was “faithfulness.”³² He defines the term faithfulness as, “The ability to stay dedicated to a task.”³³ This ability speaks to a student’s maturity, and it strengthens or weakens her walk with Christ and her relationships, especially in college. For example, when participating in a group project and given a certain task a student’s desire and drive to complete that task must be evident to the group for them to want to continue working with her in the present, and future. Chediak states, “Not keeping one’s word, or failing to commit, on the other hand, reflects a lack of maturity, and if we are inconsistent and unfaithful, our reputations will either immediately or eventually pay a price.”³⁴ Because college students will potentially be with the same group of people for two to four years, making a good impression of maturity will contribute ten-fold to a student’s success, both academically and spiritually.

Another major difference between these two guides is that Chediak focuses heavily on academics as part of a student’s life. He uses academics to encompass attitude, learning, and embracing opportunities. When a student begins college, he must be pro-active. One important aspect of a student’s career is choosing a major. Chediak says, “God knows what you’ll end up majoring in...God doesn’t reveal to us in

³² Chediak, *Thriving at College*, 151.

³³ Chediak, *Thriving at College*, 151.

³⁴ Chediak, *Thriving at College*, 151.

the Bible whether we should go with architecture, English, or history.”³⁵ Choosing a major is a student’s decision to make. God has a will for all, but he cannot make the decisions for them.

College represents a minefield of temptation and choices for a Christian college student. Chediak lays out tips that can help a student select their calling. One tip is to weigh the feedback of others, particularly a students’ mentor.. Students should ask themselves the question, “What do people tell me I’m good at?”³⁶ Cultivating strong relationships with people who are themselves successful can help a student thrive in college, and assist in finding his own destiny. Today, students rarely follow and pursue the same calling or line of work as their parents. A student should also rely on what gifts she has been given, and ask herself, “What have I had success in?”³⁷ Chances are that a student will realize where their talents lay and that the person who gave them their talents is God. We read in the Bible that Moses and David move from being ordinary to extraordinary, becoming a prophet and the other a king. Although we may not all hear from God the same way Moses and David did, he is still active, present and speaking. Chediak states that it is God who often calls us to our calling. It is he who orchestrates our life and blesses us with our talents that lead us to our calling.³⁸

³⁵ Chediak, *Thriving at College*, 206.

³⁶ Chediak, *Thriving at College*, 211.

³⁷ Chediak, *Thriving at College*, 211.

³⁸ Chediak, *Thriving at College*, 258.

Budzisewski and Chediak have many similarities and differences in their guides. Both guides attempt to help students cope with transitioning, succeeding, and influencing others to walk with Christ. Both guides represent the most recent books that attempt to address growing issues among struggling college students. Abbie Smith, a graduate from Emory University, and the author of *Can You Keep Your Faith in College*, offers a first-person perspective through the eyes of students from over fifty college campuses. She details her personal interviews with students who share their stories and experiences of transitions, challenges, and faith.

Smith's stories provide a glimpse of how Chediak's and Budziszewski's books could potentially help students in situations for which they were not personally prepared. These situations include struggling to keep faith, overcoming peer pressure, and transitioning into adult hood. This book serves as an insight, not as a guide, for other students to understand that others are going through the same feelings and emotions that they are experiencing. It also assists youth pastors, lay leaders, and counselors to understand what students may experience. Given this understanding, youth pastors can help students answer questions they may have. Although in Robbins pitfalls list of "not being an Answer man," it helps to have an understanding of what students in youth ministry can experience during college.

In *How to Stay Christian in College*, the author discussed that college is a temporary season of academic preparation and growth so that students can serve God

more effectively with the rest of their adult life.³⁹ Students have mentioned it is extremely easy to ditch their faith in college when they first arrive, because it's "abnormal" or not enough time to hold on-to and build their relationship with God. One student, Seth, states, "I thought to be a good, successful person, you had to believe in Jesus and go to church, but most of my fellow students believed in relativity and frankly seem to be doing just fine."⁴⁰ If Seth would have had the assistance of Budziszewski's guide, he may have understood that he could keep his faith and still have non-Christian friends. The primary goal is to help students keep their faith and to maintain a strong relationship with God.

Budziszewski states there is a time and place when you can discover more about a fellow student, and try to get them interested in Christ and the path that you have chosen. In Smith's book, a student named Laura from Loyola College shares her experience about a missed opportunity to enlighten a fellow student about the love and support God has given her throughout her life. She shares, *"...hallmates and I were talking, and she explained how much she longed for the love of a man, having never experienced that love from her father I dumbly listened and missed the perfect opportunity to tell her of the love of God...."*⁴¹

That passage is a brief synopsis of the situation Laura experienced. Later, she explains that she set aside a proper time to talk with her roommate, which is what

³⁹ Abbie Smith, *Can You Keep Your Faith in College?* (Sisters, OR: Multnomah, 2006), 27.

⁴⁰ Smith, *Faith in College*, 27.

⁴¹ Smith, *Faith in College*, 55.

Budzisewski talks about in his guide. There is a time to be a student, there is a time to be a friend, and there is a time to be a Christian. It is great to observe real life situations to gain a student's perspective on how they have tried to influence other students on a college campus.

Now, remember that the first book discussed had similarities and differences to the other guide discussed, *Thriving at College*. Luckily, those who have shared their stories in *Can You Keep Your Faith in College* have all experienced the struggle of balancing student life with the pressure of remaining faithful to God. For example, Dan B from George Fox University shared his story about being able to balance the stress of college activities. Talking about God, he stated, "See that hour right in the middle of the day-that's all yours!" He says that hour stayed God's hour for about a week, but other commitments started to take over. *Thriving at College* could have served Dan well to help him manage his time, and to remind him that there is always time for God, even if it may not be an hour.

Abbie Smith dedicates part of her compilation of student accounts to "the pressures and why relationships matter."⁴² Some of these accounts include Leslie, who struggles with alcohol addiction, Tara, who struggles with bulimia, and Arunan, who struggles with masturbation. There is pressure on a college campus, especially for Christians, to do things with which they are not comfortable. A student's maturity level is recognized and tested countless times throughout their college career. Chediak

⁴² Smith, *Faith in College*, 75.

speaks heavily about maturity levels, stating they can make or break a student during his transition from high school to college.⁴³

Nick J, a student in Smith's book, shares his experience about putting God on hold. He states, "God, I know you're there, but you know, I'm just having too much fun right now."⁴⁴ Fun is great when it is constructive and productive fun, but Nick was not doing that. Between drinking, smoking, sex, and freedom, Nick was digging himself into a hole and did notice it until his senior year. Now, Nick obviously lacked maturity when he first began his college journey, but one thing Chediak does not state in his guide is that it is possible to mature on campus as well. Being independent breeds a new sense of entitlement to a college youth that they may not exactly be ready for, like Nick, for example. However, by the end of his account, we see him grow and realize that the party life was not for him; he rekindled his relationship with God by his senior year.

Conclusion

The three books discussed in this chapter can contribute greatly to the success of coaching, empowering, and leading a young Christian college student. *How to Stay Christian in College* can help a student learn how to become a leader, and it can help a leader understand the conflicting theories and opinions that make students question their faith. *Thriving in College* can help a student stay away from behaviors that can be

⁴³ Smith, *Faith in College*, 93.

⁴⁴ Smith, *Faith in College*, 105.

detrimental to their success, emphasizing that it is a time for maturity to take precedent in their life. This guide can help a teacher understand that college is not easy, but hectic, so they must have patience with their students. The leader may even need to adapt to the student's schedule, not the other way around.

Lastly, *Can You Keep Your Faith in College* is a secondary guide that can help students feel like they are not the only ones who are struggling with their issues, offering comfort in times of hardship when they may be questioning themselves, others, or their relationship with God. Leaders can get real life examples that can help them mold how to lead their students, if they recognize similar symptoms of issues in their students. In addition, leaders can learn how to coach insecure students who are not handling college well. These three books can help leaders coach and mentor young students so that these challenges can and will be addressed prior to leaving home and entering a whole new environment.

Robbins's discipleship model creates a picture of a youth ministry focused on Jesus, that calls students to service, that nurtures maturity, and builds community.⁴⁵ All of these happen in relationship. The work presented here was meant to provide comparisons of the different models of pre-college youth ministry, and to show that the struggles of students with their faith transition into college is directly related to the chosen youth ministry model. The next chapter outlines an instructional guide to

⁴⁵ Chediak, *Thriving at College*, 129.

implement in youth ministry that will produce students who are grounded in their faith well beyond their college years.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESIGN

Introduction

For a number of years, statistics show that teenagers are leaving the local church once they enter college. According to Christianity Today, “LifeWay Research data shows that about 70% of young adults who indicated they have attended church regularly for at least one year in high school, do in fact, drop out.”¹ The narrative of this project methodology and implementation discusses why a discipleship model of youth ministry is important to help teenagers keep their faith in college. This portion of the thesis shows the discipleship model, which is titled “Doing Life.” It is centered on three main concepts: choosing life, walking in the light, and speaking the truth.² These concepts provide specific direction on how youth workers should engage youth ministry and live by faith. This chapter presents the framework for Doing Life, a strategic youth ministry model that can directly affect a teenager’s faith while transitioning into college.

Thus, this chapter explores the role of ministry in the world, in the church, and in teenage discipleship. Because the Bible calls us to minister to a broken world, a portion of this chapter outlines strategic youth ministry practices, guided by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The key principles for this thesis is to evangelize non-believing teenagers,

¹ Ed Stetzer, “Dropouts and Disciples: How Many Students Are Really Leaving the Church?” posted May 14, 2014, accessed August 15, 2015, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2014/may/dropouts-and-disciples-how-many-students-are-really-leaving.html>.

² Deuteronomy 30:15-16; John 3:19-20; Ephesians 4:15.

edify teenagers in community, and continue to walk and equip teenagers to build up the Kingdom of God. While “doing life” with teenagers, it should be a focus of youth workers to train them to “do life” with others. Therefore, the approach taken to embody these principles is closely aligned with biblical teachings on discipleship and fellowship within the body of Christ.³

Doing Life is shaped by three main concepts:

Choose life - Deuteronomy 30:15-16

See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. ¹⁶ For I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in obedience to him, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess.

Walk in the light - John 3:19-21

This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

Speak the truth - Ephesians 4:15

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

“Doing Life” Methodology

According to research by the Fuller Youth Institute, college freshmen identified finding a local church among the top three difficulties they faced after graduation. The number one difficulty was developing friendships. The second difficulty involved feelings

³ 2 Timothy 2:2; Acts 2:42.

of aloneness. The third was finding a new church.⁴ Brad Waggoner, LifeWay's Vice President of Research and Ministry Development, states, "Relationships are often the glue that keep people in church or serves as the attraction to begin attending again following a period of absenteeism. Many people are deeply influenced by friends and loved ones."⁵ Author Kenda Creasy Dean expresses the importance of relationships in student ministry:

Youth ministry focuses on relationships, not only because of who teenagers are but because of who God is. God is a relationship – Christian tradition uses the relational language of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to describe the persons of the Trinity – and this God's love is so generous the Godhead alone cannot contain it. Significant relationships with other Christians matter because they teach us something about what God is like – the One who can love us in spite of ourselves and who love us passionately enough to suffer willingly on our behalf.⁶

A survey conducted by LifeWay Research revealed that 70 percent of 23-30 year olds dropped out of church for at least one year between the ages of 18-22; however, 35 percent of those who indicated they dropped out of church also returned to the church.⁷ David Roozen's observation was that teenagers and young adults who became disengaged in the church did return at some point later in life. He described their

⁴ Kara E. Powell, Brad M. Griffin, and Cheryl A. Crawford, *Sticky Faith: Youth Worker Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011) 78.

⁵ Scott McConnell, "LifeWay Research Finds Reasons 18- to 22-Year-Olds Drop Out of Church," accessed November 14, 2015, <http://www.lifeway.com/Article/LifeWay-Research-finds-reasons-18-to-22-year-olds-drop-out-of-church>.

⁶ Kenda Creasy Dean and Ron Foster. *The Godbearing Life: The Art of Soul Tending for Youth Ministry* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 2005), 27.

⁷ David Rudd, "Church Dropouts: How Many Leave Church and Why," *SlideShare*, posted August 2007, accessed November 15, 2015, <http://www.slideshare.net/daverudd/church-dropouts-how-many-leave-church-and-why>.

decision to leave church as a temporary or transitional stage.⁸ Roozen surveyed students who later returned to the church and identified three reasons for returning: (1) they were encouraged by family or friends to come back; (2) they sensed a desire or calling to return to church; and (3) they experienced a life-changing event that prompted their return. Based upon this research the 50 percent of those who returned were influenced by the prayers and encouraging words of family or friends.⁹ However, the premise of this thesis-project is that the foundation for teenagers to remain in the local church and faith is directly related to relationships and discipleship that occur in youth ministry. For this purpose, the following paragraph will illustrate how the methodology of “Doing Life” was created.

This thesis project examines a discipleship model of youth ministry and relationships that have been established over the course of five years. This includes interviews, accountability sessions, one-on-ones, counseling sessions, and small groups. Relationships and conversations with teenagers have shaped the majority of this methodology. The relationships that were established in regards to this methodology span across the country, and cover three different denominations (Baptist, United Church of Christ, and Presbyterian). Students were observed during this period by myself or another youth worker, primarily from high school to their freshman year of college.

⁸ David A. Roozen, “Church Dropouts: Changing Patterns of Disengagement and Re-Entry,” *Review of Religious Research* 21, no. 4 (1980): 446.

⁹ Roozen, “Church Dropouts: Changing Patterns of Disengagement and Re-Entry,” 446.

Discipleship to the World

In a world filled with pain and sadness, many teenagers are searching for life and deliverance. It is the role of the church to minister to the world through the community. An effective church must eat, breathe, and live within the culture of the community in order to minister to the community and see it transformed by the gospel of Christ. The church must sow seeds of love, kindness, grace, and redemption. The mission of the church to the world is to take Acts 1:8 in a very literal sense. The church must be deeply entrenched in their communities to minister to the needs of the people. As Gerhard Lohfink notes in his book *Jesus and Community*, the synoptic tradition has shown that Jesus was concerned with community.¹⁰ Before the church can minister God's word and be effective, it must meet the basic needs of teenagers.

The world is full of sin. There are dying people who need Christ, and yet there appears to be a lack of urgency within the church to minister to a sick and dying world. As a youth pastor who was raised in the church, and who has worked for multiple churches of different denominations for the last 10 years, I have observed pastors and church leaders devote more time and energy to increase attendance and to add more programs. Although both of these are important, there needs to be an urgent response to the struggling teens who are searching for new hope in Christ.

This research project hopes to impact youth workers who seek to live and do ministry in community for the purpose of making disciples for Christ in the world.

¹⁰ Gerhard Lohfink, *Jesus and Community: The Social Dimension of Christian Faith* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1984), 70.

Stanley Hauerwas, in his book *Resident Aliens*, says, “The world needs the church because, without the church, the world does not know who it is.”¹¹ The only way for the world to know that it is being redeemed is for the church to point to the Redeemer by being a redeemed people.¹² Another goal of this thesis is to help college students stay grounded in living life as a redeemed and restored person, realizing they are lost without Christ. For those who will never come into the church to meet Christ, youth workers must go out into the community to introduce people to Christ by the way we “Do Life.” An unknown source once stated, “Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.”

Discipleship to the Community

The New Testament is filled with examples of how Jesus was in community with others. Jesus was always “doing life” with his disciples. He encouraged his disciples to “do life” with each other. Lohfink notes that Jesus intentions were to form a reconciled society out of the fractured and diseased people of God.¹³ This reconciled society is found throughout the Pauline mission communities in the togetherness of Jew and Gentile, slave and free, and man and woman.¹⁴ Throughout the New Testament,

¹¹ Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony* (New York, NY: Abingdon, 1989), 94.

¹² Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*, 94.

¹³ Lohfink, *Jesus and Community*, 99.

¹⁴ Lohfink, *Jesus and Community*, 99.

togetherness, or the call to “do life” with others, is exemplified. We are called to live in harmony with one another, welcome one another, admonish one another, wait for one another, care for one another, serve one another, bear one another’s burdens, comfort one another, build up one another, and be at peace with one another.¹⁵ We have these examples of how to live as a community throughout Scripture.

Living, eating, drinking, and gathering among them, should be some of the first steps in the edification of teenagers in community. This is essential to see teenagers grow and mature in their personal relationships with Christ. Youth workers want to help foster teenagers’ relationships with Christ, but we must engage with them emotionally, spiritually, and mentally. We may even need to engage with them to them stay physically fit. The process by which we do life with teenagers may involve hikes in the mountains to experience the wonderful creation of God, breaking bread over breakfast, lunch and dinner, praying with them, traveling with them, and anything else that involves being with them in communion with God.

In *In the Name of Jesus*, Henry Nouwen discusses his experience of joining the Daybreak community. After Nouwen had been teaching for over 20 years, he was led to leave the academic life, and become a priest for mentally handicapped people and their assistants.¹⁶ Nouwen said he reflected about his life as a priest during his years at Daybreak. He wanted to discern which of his own experiences and insights would be

¹⁵ Romans 12:16; Romans 15:7; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 11:33; 1 Corinthians; Galatians 5:13; Galatians 6:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:13.

¹⁶ Henry Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* (New York, NY: Crossroad/Faith and Formation, 1993), 12.

beneficial for others as he ministered to those who live in difficult circumstances.¹⁷

Nouwen desired for his handicap and disabled friends to be able to minister to others as they were ministering to him.

This example of community speaks to the heart of ministering to teenagers.

Youth workers are to minister to the community, and train up teenagers so they can go forth and minister to other communities as well. Ministering to a community of teenagers must come from a deep spiritual calling by God that is awakened by the Holy Spirit. The calling to minister to a community of teenagers should come from wounds that were healed and restored by “doing life with others” and living in a healthy community. The foundation of doing life with teenagers is closely related to the biblical and theological themes in the former chapters.¹⁸

In *The Wounded Healer*, Henri Nouwen writes discusses how a broken minister can be effective in a broken world. In four chapters, he discussed ministry in a dislocated world, ministry for a rootless generation, ministry to a hopeless man, and ministry by a lonely minister.¹⁹ He concluded that when we stop running from our pains and allow them to be “mobilized,” then our pains become the central point for our healing and ministry to others. Out of our wounds comes our call to minister and to be an example to those who are struggling to overcome their own wounds. In *Essential Church: Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts*, Thom Rainer and Sam Rainers offer churches four

¹⁷ Nouwen, *Wounded Healer*, 15.

¹⁸ See Chapter 2.

¹⁹ Henri J.M. Nouwen and Roel De Jong, *The Wounded Healer: Ministry in Contemporary Society*, 15.

concrete solutions toward making their worship community an essential part these young people's lives again:

- Simplify - develop a clear structure and process for making disciples.
- Deepen - provide strong biblical teaching and preaching.
- Expect - let members know the need for commitment to the congregation.
- Multiply - emphasize evangelism, outward focus, and starting new churches or small groups for teenagers.²⁰

Discipleship to the Church

One of the equipping aspects of the youth ministry model is to disciple the church to minister to teenagers. This idea is rooted in teaching others how to live in close relationship with the Triune God. It involves educating the church in the Word of God, and showing them how to minister to teenagers. Paul's expresses this to the saints at Ephesus when he notes that we should equip the saints for the work of ministry and for building up the body of Christ. Paul is the leading example of how to equip the Church to minister effectively to the teenagers within the body of Christ. It was Paul who mentored a young Timothy so that Timothy could go out into the world and preach the good news of Jesus Christ.

Building up the kingdom of God involves teaching others how to minister in love, walk with integrity, and live according to the Holy Spirit. For example, discipleship may involve providing Christian books to cultivate the disciple's spiritual growth, biblical

²⁰ Thom Rainer and Sam Rainers, *Essential Church: Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 2008)

doctrine, ministerial training, and personal devotions. In a broader sense, equipping the Church for building up the Kingdom with teenagers involves Bible study, Sunday school, and other programs that could educate and foster their biblical understanding of youth ministry. It is important to remember, when discipling teenagers, there must be a clear understanding of what the church believes and how it is aligned with biblical doctrine.

Discipleship to the Church includes equipping volunteers to have the greatest impact on teaching teenagers. This can include how to impart sound theology according to their local church, explicating apologetic techniques when appropriate, and demonstrating biblical hermeneutics when teaching or preaching to teenagers. It is the youth pastor's responsibility to ensure that those who volunteer and prepare to go into ministry to disciple teenagers have their theology established. I have seen firsthand what an inexperienced and uneducated minister can do to a community, church, and individual. By doing life with others, it is more than just being with them, it is teaching them sound biblical doctrine that is aligned with the Gospels and New Testament.

Doing Life by Discipleship

The application "Doing Life" begins with praying and discerning those whom God wishes for youth workers to disciple. In *Transforming Disciples*, Greg Ogden notes the biblical model in which Jesus chooses his twelve apostles. It is estimated that four to six months into Jesus' public ministry he selected twelve of his disciples from the larger

group to become his twelve apostles.²¹ Luke 6:12-13 notes that, prior to doing this selection, Jesus went into the mountain to pray and spent the night in prayer with God. Jesus was always intentional about being in community, but he was also intentional about seeking his Father's discernment when making decisions. This is important and vital to the methodology of "Doing Life."

The Bible gives instructions on how to transform teenagers' lives for Christ. The Bible is the good news that should be the primary guide in discipleship. The Bible should be lived out through the life of the youth worker, by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, so that it will be self-evident to those with whom God calls youth workers to do life. Ogden notes that the only way for Jesus to grow flawed and faithless common people into mature disciples, and to make sure that His kingdom transcends his earthly ministry, is to have a core who possess an in-depth knowledge of his person and mission.²² For this reason, pastoral skills for youth workers are utilized in individual shepherding of his sheep.

Doing Life by discipleship requires youth workers to be an active teaching pastor within the church, mentoring teenagers, and cultivating healthy relationships with their youth groups. It is helpful to note, one out of five teenagers prefer their youth worker to have an active role on Sunday mornings within their local church. Mentoring is best done in small groups and individual shepherding relationships. These are just a few of

²¹ Greg Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship: Making Disciples a Few at a Time* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2003), 60.

²² Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 65.

the many forms in which “Doing Life” can occur. Although there are multiple ways to mentor teenagers, ministry to the church, community and world are being highlighted.

According to Ogden, discipleship is fundamentally a relational process.²³ Perhaps, calling people from the crowds to focus on a few does not sound like a lot of people will hear about Jesus, but I believe it is effective ministry. Jesus left his ninety-nine to go and save the lone lost sheep. Ogden suggests churches rely too heavily on programs and preaching to make disciples. He goes on to say that this could be the case because our society no longer wants to pay the price of personal investment that discipleship requires.²⁴ “Doing Life” in youth ministry is to make disciples by youth workers investing their lives into those teenagers with whom God has chosen for them to “do life.” The Bible states that there is a season and time for everything under the sun.²⁵

There is no single best pathway or model for discipleship. For generations, discipleship has taken place in Church, small groups, church programs, one-on-one relationships, and a host of other ways. Ogden says discipling is, “A process that takes place within accountable relationships over a period of time for the purpose of bringing believers to spiritual maturity in Christ.”²⁶ The main goal of “doing life” is entwined with discipleship—to produce healthy mature Christians within the body of Christ.

²³ Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 67.

²⁴ Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 67.

²⁵ Ecclesiastes 3.

²⁶ Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 54.

For example, Rick Warren, pastor of Saddleback Community Church in Southern California, has developed a discipleship model called “Life Development Process.” Warren’s model is conceptualized in the form of a baseball diamond. First base is the covenant of membership, by which one makes a commitment to Jesus Christ. Second base is the covenant of maturity, by which a person commits to basic spiritual disciplines for growth. Third base is the covenant of ministry, by which one discovers and commits, to be involved in ministry consistent with one’s spiritual gifts, heart, abilities, personality, life, and experience.²⁷ This model may work for some churches, and it has proven to be popular in modified forms to fit the needs of individual congregations.

Although I do not disagree with Rick Warren’s model, I offer a different model for those who wish to disciple a few people at a time. In agreement with Greg Ogden, we must grow Christians into self-initiating, reproducing, fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. It is my philosophy of ministry that it is not the quantity of how many disciples we make, but the quality of the effectiveness of those we disciple. Jesus Christ has bestowed upon youth pastors and every Christian the task to disciple others through the process of “doing life.”

Doing Life is being involved in highly accountable, relational, small groups, mentoring programs, and one-on-one relationships as productive to the spiritual growth of others. If anything, preaching at its best calls people to become a disciple by pointing

²⁷ Rick Warren, *Saddleback’s Life Development Church Concept*, accessed March 17, 2016, <http://store.pastors.com/products/saddlebacks-life-development-church-concept>.

people to disciple-making settings, such as reproducible, discipling relationships.²⁸

Therefore, youth programs are okay, but disciples cannot be mass-produced. Youth workers must carve out time to make disciples through individual shepherding, instead of continuing to make mass programs, waiting to see what the program will make of them. It is important that new teenagers in Christ have a clear understanding who Christ is and what the church believes by connecting in a small group ministry and signing up for a new members class.

Youth pastors should disciple others through individual shepherding. Jesus' leadership styles varied in relationships to the readiness of his followers. There was no one way in which Jesus ministered to people. Jesus had a model of discipleship that we can observe from his public ministry. With regularity, Jesus often demonstrated that the disciples should listen to children, feed the poor, help the homeless, and look after the sick. Often, after Jesus taught a parable or saying, he turned to his disciples to offer further explanation or to ask questions.²⁹ In "doing life" with others, life circumstances become the setting for the exegetical work of God's Word. In the midst of real problems and real needs being met, comes this awakening of who Christ really is. This is why it is so important for individual shepherding in community.

²⁸ Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 67.

²⁹ Ogden, *Transforming Discipleship*, 87.

Doing Life by Mentorship

In “Doing Life,” individual shepherding occurs in “transforming disciples.” Individual shepherding takes the form of a mentor-mentee relationship. In shepherding others, the role of the mentor is to imitate Christ to their mentee. Paul (the mentor) “did life” with Timothy (the mentee). In the Pauline letters, Paul combines his parental self-understanding with a call to the Corinthians to imitate his life. The mentee must know and experience the unconditional love and protection of Christ throughout the process labeled as “Doing Life.”

Another form of mentoring defines the principles of living. When we look at Scripture for lifestyle mentoring, we think of Paul and Timothy. From a biblical perspective, Paul was Timothy’s father in the faith. According to author Fred Smith, the reasonability was for Paul to lead by integrity and for Timothy to observe and live accordingly.³⁰ Smith said mentoring is to be open, real and consistently personifying the lifestyle of Christ.³¹ Lifestyle mentoring is considered an art. There are unique forms of mentoring, and churches are increasingly starting mentoring programs, but more are needed. “Mentoring is a one-to-one relation between a mentor and mentee for the specific and definable development of a skill or an art.”³² Part of mentoring involves helping those who wish to walk in the light to make healthy decisions, to set goals for

³⁰ Fred Smith, *Leading With Integrity: Competence with Christian Character* (Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1999), 137.

³¹ Smith, *Leading With Integrity*, 137.

³² Smith, *Leading With Integrity*, 139.

their life, and to essentially lead them to Christ or foster their relationship with Christ.

There is no single best formula to mentoring. As Fred noted, the mentor must genuinely believe in the potential in the mentee.

Doing Life by Small Groups

Small groups are important in “Doing Life” with teenagers. In *The Search to Belong*, Joseph Myers defines four spaces to which we long to belong. The first element is described as public space. Our public belonging occurs when people connect through an outside influence such as Christ.³³ This is important to small groups as each individual should be led and influenced by the Holy Spirit, who is greater than us. The second element is described as social space. This is important because it provides a space for “neighbor” and “safe” relationships.³⁴ Small groups must be a place where you can share with your neighbor and feel that it is safe and confidential.

The third element allows for personal space to share private thoughts and concerns without feeling judged or condemned.³⁵ This should also be the case in any one-on-one mentoring relationships. Finally, the fourth space allows for intimate space where experiences, feelings, and thoughts can be shared and truth spoken.³⁶ Small groups

³³ Joseph Myers, *The Search to Belong: Rethinking Intimacy, Community, and Small Groups* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003), 142.

³⁴ Myers, *Search to Belong*, 142.

³⁵ Myers, *Search to Belong*, 143.

³⁶ Myers, *Search to Belong*, 143.

keep us walking in the light of truth so that we can be healed by being honest and open in communal relationships. Some form of small group should be offered at every church. This gives believers appropriate outlets, creates a greater sense of community, and builds integrity.

Leading with integrity and living by integrity is another vital goal in my philosophy of ministry. “Doing Life” with others means you have a sense of awareness of who you are in Christ and that your integrity is in tact. Doing Life by small groups can create a deeper level of accountability. Accountability can take place both in small groups and mentoring relationships. Within small groups, there is freedom to gather with other believers for worship, prayer, Bible study, and communion. All of these work to create an environment of togetherness, which is needed for the Christian life.

Doing Life by Accountability

Accountability in relationships is a necessary aspect of any Christian discipleship model. Christians are to love one another, serve one another, teach one another, encourage one another, be subject to one another, confess to one another, forgive one another, and the list continues.³⁷ Living out the Christian faith cannot be accomplished in isolation. Fifty-eight percent of those who disengaged from the local church provided at least one of the fourteen relational reasons for disengagement.³⁸ Out of the fourteen

³⁷ John 13:34-35; Galatians 5:13; Romans 15:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Ephesians 5:21; James 5:16; Colossians 3:13.

³⁸ See Rudd, “Church Dropouts,” 11 for full list.

reasons, the top three are life changes/situations; pastor related-religious issues; ethical or political beliefs. As teenagers go deeper in their faith, there should be a longing for a repentant heart and to have their mentor hold them accountable.

Annotated Qualitative Approach

For the past 4 years (2011-2015) of full time student ministries in Florida, Georgia, Massachusetts and California, the author has had the privilege of encountering over 1,000 students. These students ranged from grade six through college. With years of counseling teenagers in one-on-ones, small groups, and private conversations over pizza, candy and air hockey, the author asked a very common question: "What has influenced your faith that you continue to journey with God throughout high school and college?" Most students replied, "You, my youth pastor!" Of course, it is always a good feeling to be appreciated; still, there was a deeper meaning behind the polite Jesus answer. Digging deeper into the question unveiled three common themes among the high school students and first year college students. These are some quotes from students who had various answers to the authors' questions:

"Your previous teachings really helped me growing up these past few years and being with during time had really matured me and has helped shaped me into the person I am today."

-12th Grader from Medfield, Massachusetts

"Relationships!"

-10th grader from Los Altos, California, August 2014

"The atmosphere, and the learning experience."

-12th grader from Leesburg, Florida, May 2015

"You're the most easiest person to be honest with."

-Senior in College from Celebration, Florida, June 2013

"The Community, and the bonds you make with not only students but adults."

-Freshman in College, Cupertino, California, July 2015

"Community and fellowship for sure."

-Junior in College, Atlanta Georgia, August 2013

"The main things are just good talks that relate to what's going on in my life and meeting people the same age as you to join a small group with and hangout with. Like finding a good accountability buddy."

-Sophomore in College, Clemson, South Carolina July 2011

"The community was a strong aspect. But also the inspiration to be myself all the time, especially now in college."

-Sophomore in College -Marietta, Georgia, October 2013

"Summer camp...it was the community that existed during the summer after my senior year of high school."

-Sophomore in College, Azusa, California July 2015

"7th grade summer camp! I got close to a lot of people and that helped build friendships that supported me and helped keep accountable with my faith, also my faith became a big part of my life after then because I sorta like felt God's presence there and that made me wanna follow him."

-Freshman in College, Los Angeles, California September 2015

The above are a handful of comments and responses received from students.

The author chose to use an annotated qualitative approach to gain data from students.

For example, the goal was to evaluate the diverse views and attitude students had towards faith and their time in student ministries. Conversations with students over the past four years were intended to discover what, if any, particular event or program within student ministry helped grow and sustain their faith. Evaluation of that data aided in planning a step-by-step discipleship plan that has the potential to assess

participant needs. Although this part of the project's methodology is subjective, it yielded great insight in crafting the "Doing Life" model.

Respondents who participated in the pre-interview part of this study were students of the author, and their spiritual journey was tracked over several months and years. The core of what influenced their faith to remain on the journey with Christ was relationships. Out of approximately fifteen students with whom the author followed up, three primary disciplines that helped them remain in the faith were relationships, accountability, and small group. Of course, these three disciplines develop over a period of time within community. Therefore, this insight led to the development of the "Doing Life" curriculum for student ministries, which can be used over a period of four or more years.

Student ministry is filled with all sorts of teenagers who go through different phases of life. In *When Church Kids Go Bad*, Les Christie addressed many of the relational challenges that occur during adolescence, and how youth workers can develop healthy relationships that mature them into spiritually healthy young adults within the church.³⁹ Since student ministries are filled with believers and nonbelievers youth group, outings and occasional small groups could be a good way to invest in students with relational challenges at home. Not all teenagers responded the same way to the question, "What influenced your faith thus far to remain on the journey with Christ?" The majority of college students who were interviewed were raised in a

³⁹ Les Christie, *When Church Kids Go Bad: How to Love and Work with Rude, Obnoxious, and Apathetic Students* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008) 21.

Christian home, or who were at least somewhat active in youth group, expressed knowledge of God, but were not actively practicing their faith. When asked why, the top five answers were, “too busy,” “not interested anymore because my friends aren’t going,” “no transportation to Church,” “stopped believing,” and “Church was not relevant.”

Questionnaire

Students who participated in some form of the “Doing Life” model over the past four years completed a survey to gauge their discipleship process.⁴⁰ The questionnaire was distributed to eighteen college students between the ages of 18-25. Students were randomly selected from students who had either been through the Doing Life model or who had experienced some aspect of being in an accountability group, a small group, or a one-on-one mentorship. The demographic was made up of male and female, Caucasian students from middle to upper class. All the students ranged from 18 to 22 years of age had completed one or more semesters in a 2-4 year college or university. The author consulted with a social researcher, Dr. Bryan Auday, to ascertain if the questions asked on the survey would yield the information needed.

The questionnaire was conducted during a one-week period, and answers were kept confidential. The findings informed the author that elements of the “Doing Life” discipleship program did contribute to students keeping their faith and remaining more

⁴⁰ See Appendix A, Doing Life Questionnaire.

active in church or spiritual life disciplines.⁴¹ Upon analyzing notes, student feedback, and the results from the questionnaire, the “Doing Life” model was developed to provide youth workers with tools they can use to tailor their already existent student ministries program.⁴²

The author of this project is currently implementing various elements of the “Doing Life” model in student ministry. Eugene Peterson once wrote, “It is not difficult in such a world to get a person interested in the message of the gospel; it is terrifically difficult to sustain the interest.”⁴³ The “Doing Life” model involves long-term obedience in the same direction, with each student that enters student ministries. The journey starts in student ministries and continues through their young adult years. Students need to experience healthy relationships in youth ministry so they can know where to gravitate while transitioning into college.

Conclusion

Doing life with teenagers should be a calling from God. Doing life is more than preaching, teaching, and leading worship. Doing life is coming along side teenagers and sharing live together. Doing life rejoices in the glorious times of a teen’s life; yet, it weeps and mourns during the sad ones. The philosophy of Doing Life can be

⁴¹ See Appendix B, Questionnaire Results.

⁴² See Appendix C, Doing Life Model.

⁴³ Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2000) 16.

applied to various venues and ministry opportunities. Doing life is not limited to youth ministry, but can apply to any Christian environment that allows truth to be spoken in love to others.

Matthew 28:19 instructs all believers to, “Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey.” Jesus’ command should evoke within every believer a sense of urgency to proclaim the Gospel, especially to teenagers. “Doing Life” is more than a ministry or calling, it is what God created youth workers to do within the Church. Chapter 5 will outline the results of how this methodology has been used over the last five years, its current use in ministry, and recommendations based on outcomes of this youth ministry model.

Teenagers submerged themselves in the culture of social media without knowing the ramifications of their issues, the lifestyle as a believer, or the long-term consequences of their actions. Once a teenager has been thoroughly disgusted with the ways of this world, discipleship takes on a whole new meaning. There should be a yearning of repentance, a conviction in the heart, and a greater understanding of sin. Conviction is needed for an authentic transparency in teen discipleship because it will allow for accountability within any “Doing Life” relationship.

CHAPTER 5

OUTCOMES

Introduction

The “Doing Life” model of ministry flows out of an awareness of one’s brokenness. There is a significant amount of brokenness in the lives of students, and student ministry needs to be a safe place for young people to find healing. Because a lot of student brokenness can come from past trauma or a dysfunctional family, true authentic discipleship with students needs to come from within the Church.

This research sought to discover what current college students have identified as successful spiritual disciplines, effectively helping them to remain in the faith. For this reason, college participants must have participated in the youth group during high school prior to the survey, and they needed to have completed at least one semester in college. The survey was distributed November of 2015.

How to Read the Graphs

Five response options exist for every question. Participant 7 accidentally omitted the last page of the survey, which had 4 questions. Please note that this has been noted in the corresponding graph below.

At the top of each graph is the survey question. Beneath each survey question is a graph that illustrates the results. The top shaded part of the graph shows frequency, percent, valid percent, and cumulative percent of each participant’s answer. The left

side shaded columns show the top 3 answers a participant chose. Although there were 18 participants, only 17 completed the survey in its entirety. A correlated bar chart that shows the results appears below each graph.

Results of the Project

The first three questions of the survey address the participant's reflection of the importance of God in his life. For example, 72 percent of college students who have participated in some element of a "Doing Life" model of discipleship indicated that church is very relevant to their life. That number increases by 11.1 percent when asked to what degree do you believe that God exists. About 83.8 percent of college students believed that God does exist, with participants only doubting the existence of God 27.8 percent of the time.

The reduction in college students leaving the church directly ties into their belief about God and who God is. Of the 18 participants, 15 believed very much that God existed. Only 1 responded very little.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not relevant at all	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Relevant	4	22.2	22.2	27.8
	Very relevant	13	72.2	72.2	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 1. How relevant is church to your life?

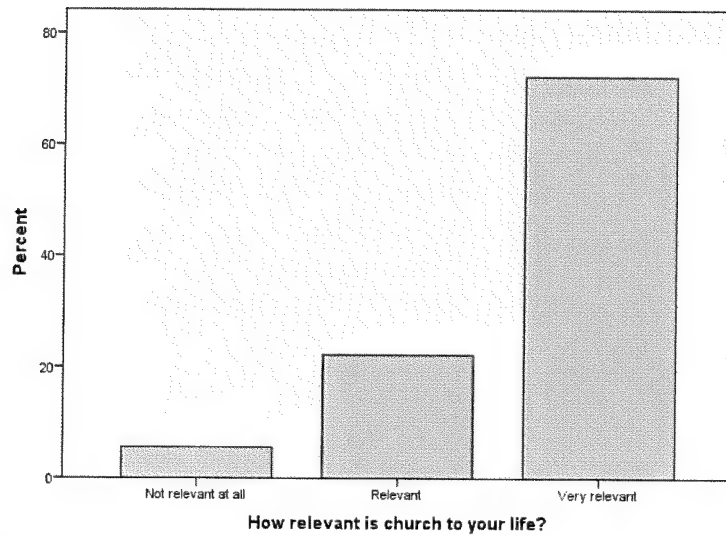


Figure 1. How relevant is church to your life?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A little	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Considerably	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	Very much	15	83.3	83.3	100.0
	Tot	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 2. To what degree do you believe that God exists?

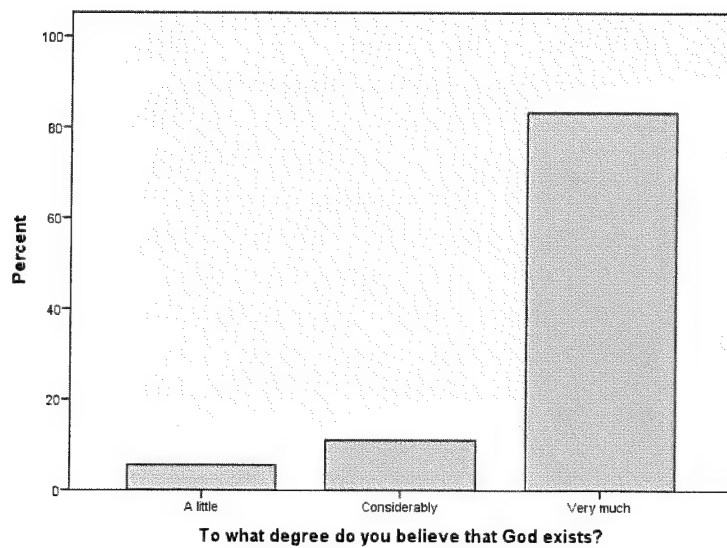


Figure 2: To what degree do you believe that God exists?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	Seldom	5	27.8	27.8	66.7
	Occasionally	1	5.6	5.6	72.2
	Often	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 3: How often do you doubt the existence of God?

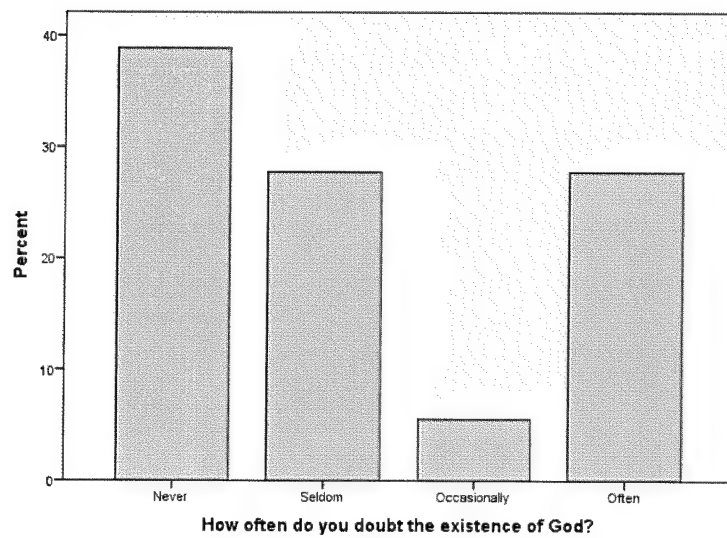


Figure 3. How often do you doubt the existence of God?

The stated frequency of a participant's attendance of a youth group or church post high school is a key point of interest in the next sequence of questions. Only 33.3 percent always attend, while 50 percent indicated they attend often. This could lead to the conclusion that those students who indicated in the pre-interview questions that community was important to their discipleship process may have perceived "church" as it relates to their group of Christian friends. Of the participants, 61.1 percent suggested a friend was attending youth group or church with them. Eleven participants indicated that peer relationships were important in the pre-interview questions. This may suggest that college students are more likely to remain involved in a college group or local church when there is a peer attending as well. It could potentially underscore the process and development of certain structures in youth ministry that build peer-to-peer relationships.

It would appear that college students from this survey are 33-38 percent likely to invite others to youth group or church. This suggests that respondents do not necessarily invite others to Church or youth group. Seven participants stated they seldom invite others (38.9%), and two participants (11.1%) stated they never invite others to church or youth group. These alarming statistics suggest the "Doing Life" model does not emphasize the importance of empowering students to invite others into the faith. The Great Commission is meant to create discipleships from all over the earth.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seldom	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Occasionally	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	Often	9	50.0	50.0	66.7
	Always	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 4. How regularly do you attend youth group/church?

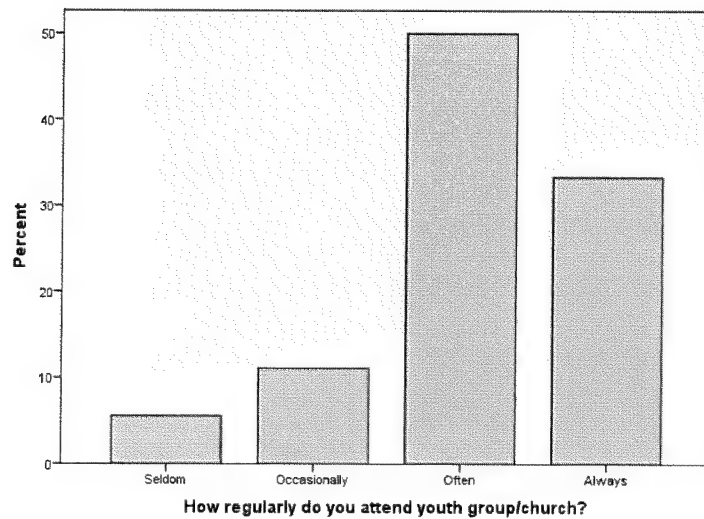


Figure 4. How regularly do you attend youth group/church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seldom	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Occasionally	1	5.6	5.6	22.2
	Often	11	61.1	61.1	83.3
	Always	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 5. How often is a close peer attending youth group/church?

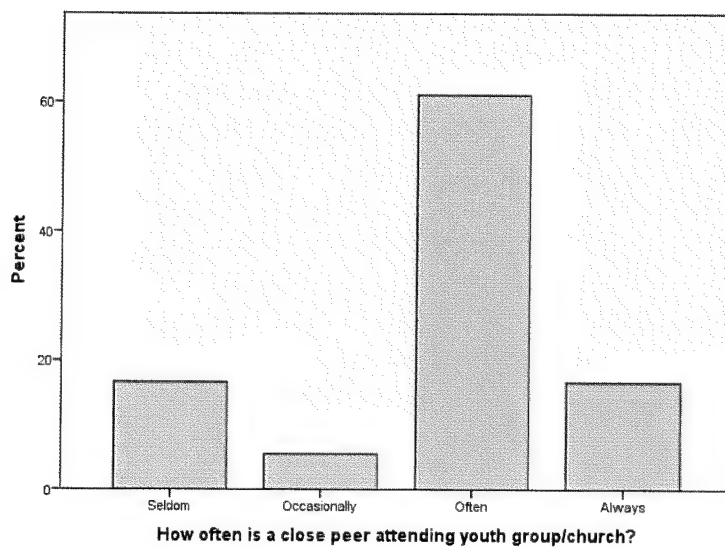


Figure 5. How often is a close peer attending youth group/church?

On the whole, respondents were regularly attending some form of college group or church, while in college with a peer. However, when respondents were asked if they were regularly inviting others to church, only 33 percent responded they invite others.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Seldom	7	38.9	38.9	50.0
	Occasionally	6	33.3	33.3	83.3
	Often	2	11.1	11.1	94.4
	Always	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 6. How often are you inviting a close peer to attend youth group/church?

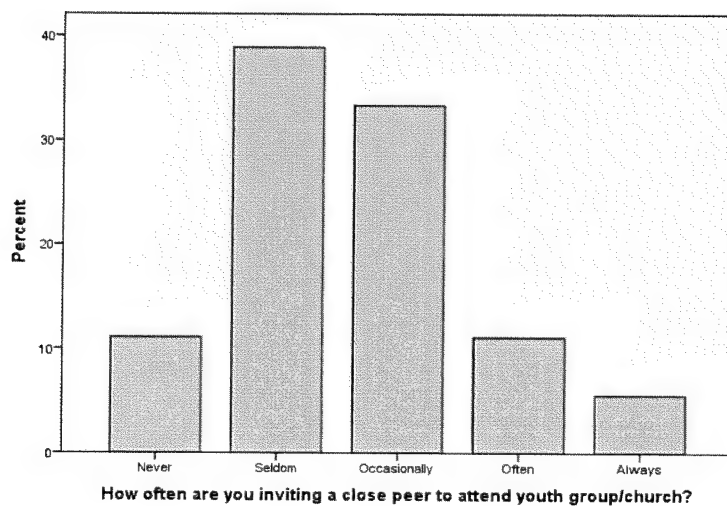


Figure 6. How often are you inviting a close peer to attend youth group/church?

When asked how often they invite a close peer to attend college group or church, respondents were equally divided between seldom and occasionally. Compared to the 66.1 percent of students who attend with a close friend, this could suggest students attend church with friends with whom they have previously attended, or other Christians they have met in college. This could also suggest college students are not necessarily inviting to church nonbelievers with whom they may be close.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seldom	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Occasionally	3	16.7	16.7	22.2
	Often	8	44.4	44.4	66.7
	Always	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 7. How often do you feel loved within a church or youth group community?

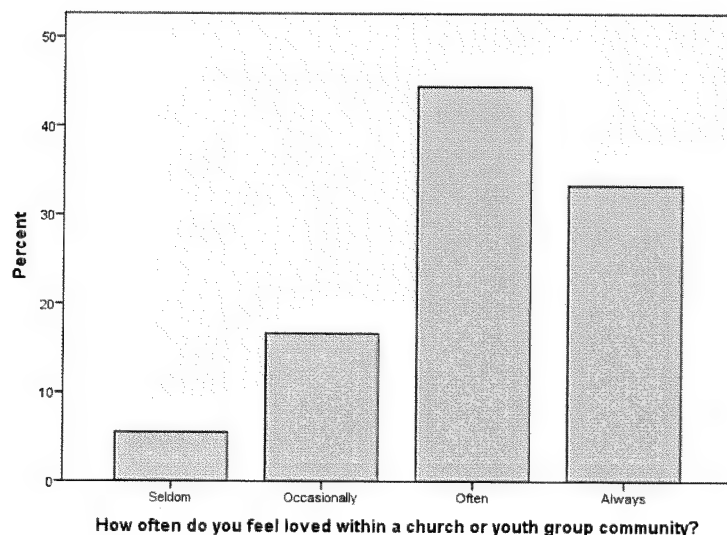


Figure 7. How often do you feel loved within a church or youth group community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Seldom	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	Occasionally	4	22.2	22.2	38.9
	Often	6	33.3	33.3	72.2
	Always	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 8. How frequently do you attend church with your family?

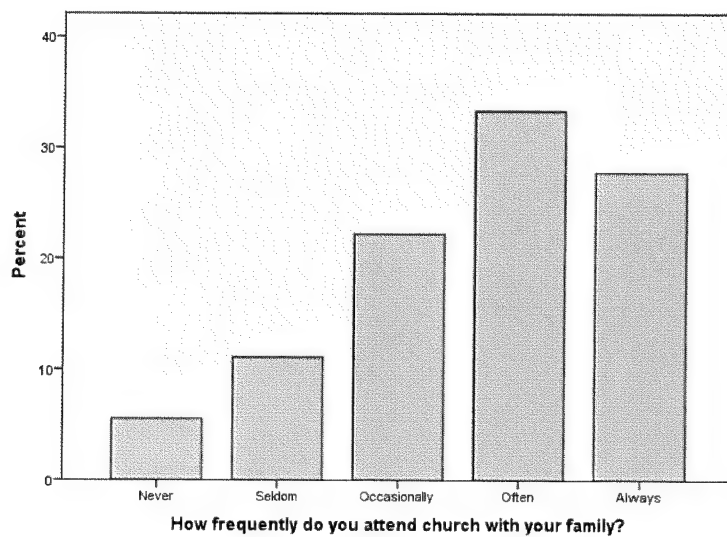


Figure 8. How frequently do you attend church with your family?

A majority of respondents reported they attend church often with their family. A little under half indicated they always attend with their family.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unimportant	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Neutral	6	33.3	33.3	44.4
	Important	5	27.8	27.8	72.2
	Very important	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 9. How important is it that your friends practice Christianity?

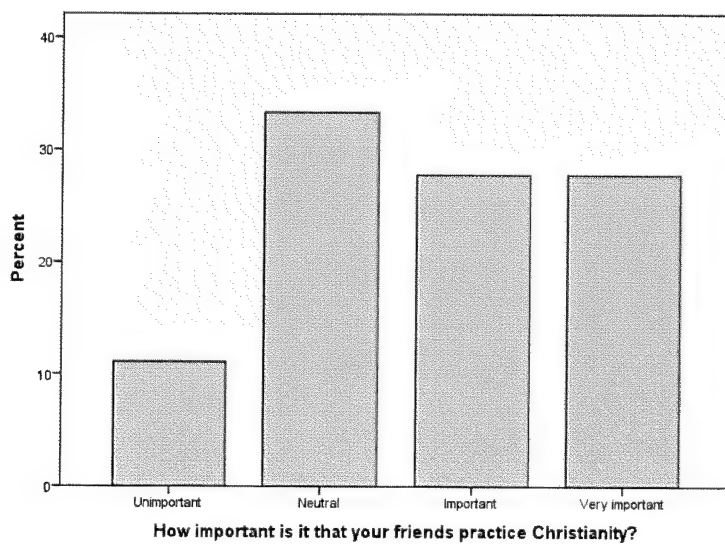


Figure 9. How important is it that your friends practice Christianity?

Respondents were equally divided on the importance of their friends practicing Christianity. This statistic may explain why only 33 percent of students who continue to practice their faith actually invite others to church.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unimportant	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Neutral	3	16.7	16.7	22.2
	Important	6	33.3	33.3	55.6
	Very important	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 10. How important is it to have friends who attend youth group or church?

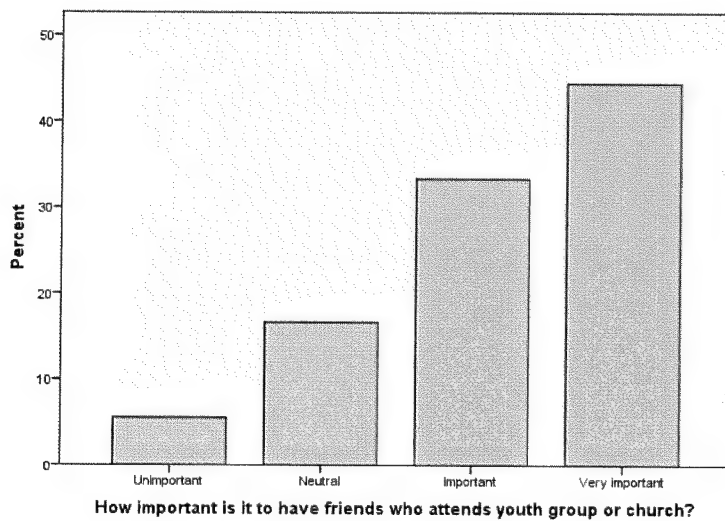


Figure 10. How important is it to have friends who attend youth group or church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unimportant	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	Neutral	7	38.9	38.9	61.1
	Important	4	22.2	22.2	83.3
	Very important	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

Table 11. How important is it to have snacks/food at youth group?

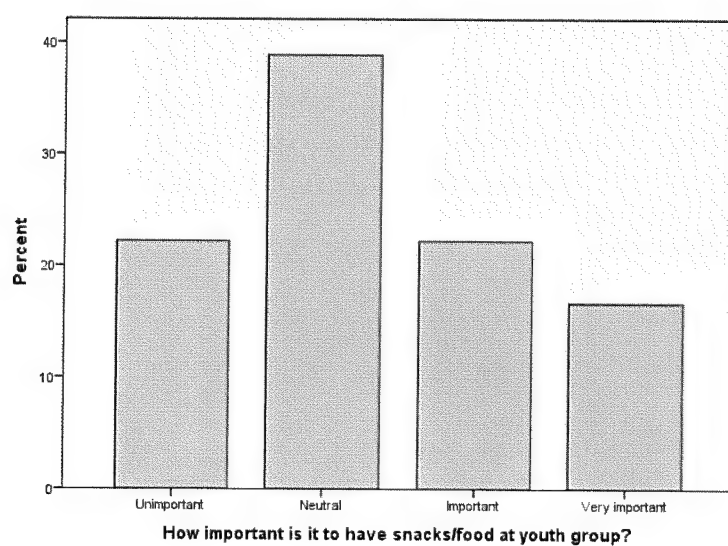


Figure 11. How important is it to have snacks/food at youth group?

The majority of respondents had neutral feelings towards snack and food being served at youth group. Overall, the responses varied.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	8	44.4	47.1	47.1
	Important	6	33.3	35.3	82.4
	Very important	3	16.7	17.6	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	5.6		
Total		18	100.0		

Table 12. How important is it to play games and have activities in youth groups?

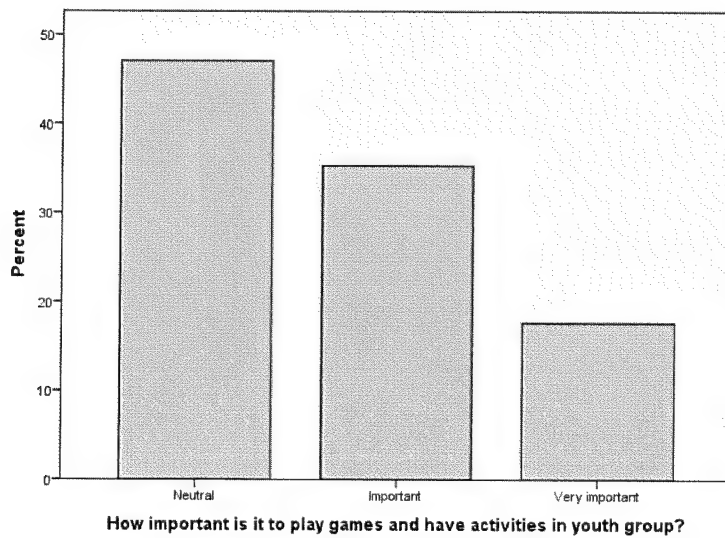


Figure 12. How important is it to play games and have activities in youth groups?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Important	8	44.4	47.1	47.1
	Very important	9	50.0	52.9	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	5.6		
Total		18	100.0		

Table 13. How important is it that the sermon is relevant to your life?

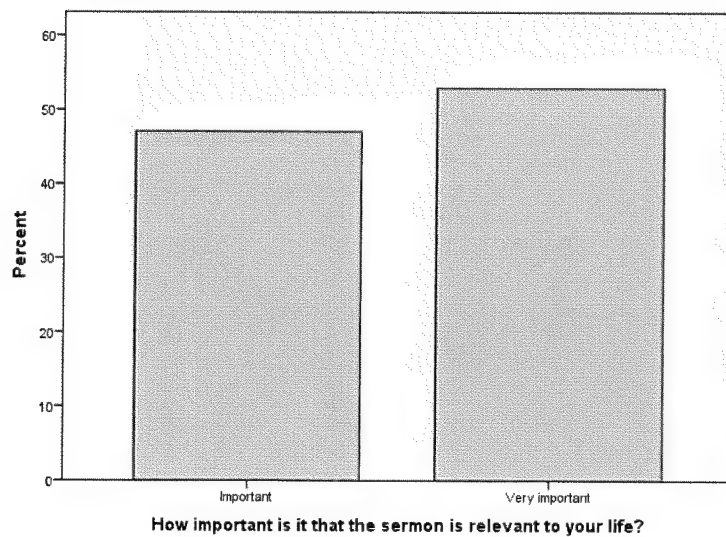


Figure 13. How important is it that the sermon is relevant to your life?

The majority of respondents stated the sermon should be very relevant to their life. This statistic validates students who stated the Biblical teachings from youth group made a significant impact on them remaining in the faith during their young adult years.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	1	5.6	5.9	5.9
	Important	3	16.7	17.6	23.5
	Very important	13	72.2	76.5	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	5.6		
Total		18	100.0		

Table 14. How important is it to continue practicing Christianity in your young adult years?

A majority of participants reported that continuing to practice their Christianity during their young adult years was very important. Only one participant indicated having neutral feelings.

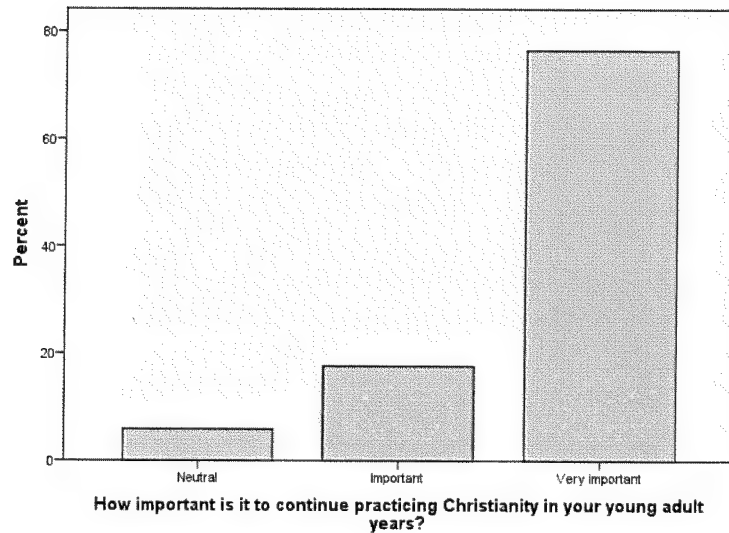


Figure 14. How important is it to continue practicing Christianity in your young adult years?

When asked about the importance of maintaining established relationships, 94 percent indicated it was of some degree of importance to very important. This is critical for this study because the majority of a “Doing Life” model of discipleship curriculum is based on relationships. Eleven college students indicated these relationships are a major factor in their faith, even as they grow older. In *Building A Youth Ministry that Builds Disciples*, Duffy Robbins lists four identifying big ideas that contribute to a lasting effect on students:

- a ministry with a focus on Jesus;
- a ministry that calls students to service;
- a ministry that nurtures maturity;

- a ministry that builds community.¹

On at least two occasions, students reported feeling neutral regarding relationships, and continued to practice Christianity during their young adult years.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	2	11.1	11.8	11.8
	Important	4	22.2	23.5	35.3
	Very important	11	61.1	64.7	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	5.6		
Total		18	100.0		

Table 15. How important is it to maintain relationships established through faith as you grow older?

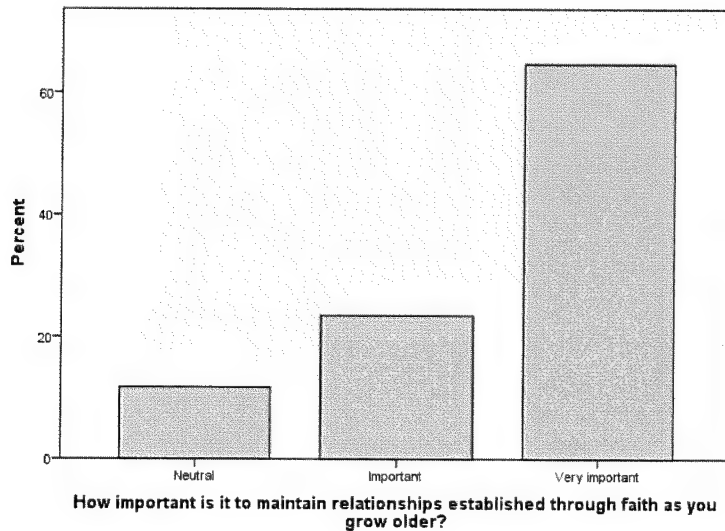


Figure 15. How important is it to maintain relationships established through faith as you grow older?

¹ Duffy Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry That Builds Disciples* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 116-117.

Evaluation

The goal of this project was to develop a strategic discipleship model for maintaining student involvement in their faith after they matriculate into college. In order to have achieved the study desired results, the objectives were:

- Capture a sample of college student feedback related to the “Doing Life” model
- Collect demographic data during interviews from students.
- Capture data from students regarding frequency of faith activity post student ministry
- Provide sample “Doing Life” model for youth pastors

The process of developing this discipleship model involved interviews with high school and college students, and a survey completed by college students who participated in this model. The main conclusion of this project encourages youth pastors to adopt a similar discipleship model in youth ministry that is comprised of small groups, one-on-one mentoring, and accountability groups. Within small groups, the Bible is studied and memorized. If this project was to be repeated, more emphasis would be placed on the study of biblical teaching. The Bible has a lot to say regarding the study of God’s word being transformative in our journey with him.

Bible Study Scriptures

“And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

--Romans 12:2

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”

--Ephesians 6:17

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”

--2 Timothy 2:2

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”

--2 Timothy 2:15

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

--2 Timothy 3:16-17

Students who were interviewed and surveyed indicated that the relational aspect of a discipleship ministry is primarily why they have kept their faith in college. Some of the common things within the interviews were community and biblical teachings that connected to the life of the student.

Theological Reflections

Luke 5: 1-11 was meant to help solidify theological views of youth pastors and their personal convictions in student discipleship. It is important to teach solid theology while “doing life” with believers and non-believers. In chapter two, the biblical foundation in which Jesus called us to disciple one another outlines how we should disciple teenagers. The theological themes surrounding ministry to the community, the world, and the church were explained in chapter two, as well. The role of the church is so important in what we believe about Christ. This is true for anyone who is a teacher and preacher of the Gospel. As a youth pastor, our role in ministry and our view of theology will shape and impact those we mentor and disciple. Because our convictions

about the role of the church influences those around us, we must be effective communicators of biblical teachings. Our ideation and strategic planning will help impact discipleship in the church, non-profit organizations, and academic institutions.

The applications outlined for one-on-one mentoring, discipleship, and individual shepherding are all a part of “Doing Life.” The calling to “do life” with others is met with discernment and prayer for those God will send to be discipled. In the church setting, “Doing Life” will be most effective in small groups of 5-7 people. Those within small groups, who need extra guidance, can be partnered with mature young adults in the church for a determined period of time. There is an appropriate season For everything in life.² “Doing Life” with people is a seasonal ministry. “Doing Life” requires that youth pastors understand the seasons of life and that they disciple teenagers in whatever season they are experiencing in their journey. The goal is to always point students to Christ and to teach them how to lead others there as well.

Limitations

The limitations of this model design did not track how other spiritual disciplines accounted for helping students remain in their faith. For example, this design did not track how much time a student spends in Bible reading, prayer, or whether there are any key factors that lead students to live a more righteous and holy life. The limitation of the questionnaire was a relatively small sample of college students. For this reason,

² Ecclesiastes 3:11.

these findings cannot generate a comprehensive conclusion of this model without further research.

Suggestions

The following recommendations are for the youth worker who may want to duplicate this project to make it palpable for the demographic in any particularly student ministry.

- Interview 10-12 random students in your youth group. The students should be regular attenders, and they should range between 9th and 12th grade, male and female. Although students may be selected at random, it is important to keep in mind students who have are fairly new to student ministries who would not have a chance to participate in small groups, one-one-ones or an accountability group. Students who have attended regularly and who currently do not attend can give insights on what affected their decisions to disengage.
- The questionnaire should be conducted only on students who have had at least a couple of years within some type of student ministry. Students do not necessarily have to be a part of the reader's student ministry. For example, the purpose of this project was to interview high school students on why they continue to attend student ministry, and to compare their answers to college students who have graduated. Both groups of participants (high school and college) would have been through

some type of youth group. For this project, the majority of the college student who participated in the survey confirmed some of the discipleship method in the “Doing Life” model indeed assisted in them currently practicing their faith.

- The findings revealed most students who have participated in the Doing Life model indicted they felt church was still relevant and considerably or very much stilled believed in God.³ Although the survey questionnaire was general, the author knew the participants and was able to have a post-survey conversation regarding their current journey with the Lord. However, a recommendation for further research, the following questions could yield better results without the need to follow up with a post-survey interview:

1. How relevant was small groups to your life during your years in Student Ministry?
2. How relevant was accountability relationships to your life during your years in Student Ministry?
3. To what degree do you believe a one-on-one relationship with your youth leader positively affected your spiritual journey?
4. To what degree, if any, were you honest with your youth leader within a one-on-one small group?
5. How comfortable, if any, were you sharing spiritual struggles to others in your small group?

- A questionnaire that can assess a college student’s spiritual growth after student ministry can help determine various areas of the readers discipleship model that are most effective in shaping their journey.

³ See Appendix B, Questionnaire Results.

Conducting a questionnaire, interview, or focus group with high school students can reveal a significant difference between the two groups. The importance of selecting students who have completed some type of discipleship model allows the reader to compare and contrast different elements of discipleship within student ministry.

- It is important to remember, when duplicating a questionnaire, to consider the demographics of the local community and the church. This project was geared towards participants who attended a Presbyterian, Baptist, or non-denomination church. Furthermore, each participant who was interviewed or who participated in the questionnaire had some degree of Reformed Theology teaching.

Conclusion

“Doing Life” with others is a way of living. As stated in chapter three, “Doing Life” is closely aligned with the biblical teachings on discipleship and fellowshiping within the body of Christ. In “Doing Life” with students, we guide the developmental process of those being mentored. As youth workers mentor others, they need to examine whether things are going well by the outcome and progress of the relationship. If a one-on-one relationship has a positive impact on their life, and the life of the one who is being mentored, then that is a good indicator things are going well. It is not probable that those students whose youth pastors are doing life with them will always see the end result.

Doing Life is more about walking with the other person, as the youth pastor walks with Christ. Although students should be in a mentoring relationship with a seasoned and mature Christian, it is important to be humble and Christ-like in our relationships. It is a prayer that Christians around the world will start “Doing Life” with one another. It is the hope that Jesus Christ will continue to fuel any “Doing Life” relationship with passion as light in a world of darkness, leading students on a life-long journey with Christ.

APPENDIX A

DISCIPLESHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

Discipleship Questionnaire
<p>This questionnaire is designed to obtain valuable feedback regarding discipleship. Your honest and frank responses will help me better understand your thoughts and attitudes regarding this valuable part of church ministry. Please be assured that all of your responses will remain anonymous and the information will be kept confidential. Do not place your name anywhere on this questionnaire. It will only take about 10 minutes to complete.</p> <p>This study is part of a larger project that I am working on for a Doctor of Ministry Program that I am enrolled in at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. By completing this anonymous questionnaire, you are agreeing to be a voluntary participant in this research project.</p> <p>Thank you for assisting with my project.</p> <p>Marcus Hill</p> <p>1. How relevant is church to your life?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very relevant</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Relevant</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Neutral</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A little relevant</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Not relevant at all</p> <p>2. To what degree do you believe that God exists?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Very much</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Considerably</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Indifferent</p> <p><input type="radio"/> A little</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Not at all</p> <p>3. How often do you doubt the existence of God?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Always</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Often</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Occasionally</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Seldom</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Never</p>

4. How regularly do you attend youth group/church?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

5. How often is a close peer attending youth group/church?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

6. How often are you inviting a close peer to attend youth group/church?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

7. How often do you feel loved within a church or youth group community?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

8. How frequently do you attend church with your family?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Often
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Never

9. How important is it that your friends practice Christianity?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Not at all important

10. How important is it to have friend who attends youth group or church?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Not at all important

11. How important it to have snacks/food at youth group?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Not at all important

12. How important is it to play games and have activities in youth group?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Not at all important

13. How important is it that the sermon is relevant to your life?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Not at all important

14. How important is it to continue practicing Christianity in your young adult years (young adult years for the purpose of this survey are the ages between 18-25)?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Not at all important

15. How important is it to maintain relationships established through faith as you grow older?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Important
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Unimportant
- ☐ Not at all important

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Frequency Tables

How relevant is church to your life?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not relevant at all	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Relevant	4	22.2	22.2	27.8
	Very relevant	13	72.2	72.2	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

To what degree do you believe that God exists?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	A little	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Considerably	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	Very much	15	83.3	83.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How often do you doubt the existence of God?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	7	38.9	38.9	38.9
	Seldom	5	27.8	27.8	66.7
	Occasionally	1	5.6	5.6	72.2
	Often	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How regularly do you attend youth group/church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seldom	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Occasionally	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	Often	9	50.0	50.0	66.7
	Always	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How often is a close peer attending youth group/church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seldom	3	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Occasionally	1	5.6	5.6	22.2
	Often	11	61.1	61.1	83.3
	Always	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How often are you inviting a close peer to attend youth group/church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Seldom	7	38.9	38.9	50.0
	Occasionally	6	33.3	33.3	83.3
	Often	2	11.1	11.1	94.4
	Always	1	5.6	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How often do you feel loved within a church or youth group community?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Seldom	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Occasionally	3	16.7	16.7	22.2
	Often	8	44.4	44.4	66.7
	Always	6	33.3	33.3	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How frequently do you attend church with your family?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Seldom	2	11.1	11.1	16.7
	Occasionally	4	22.2	22.2	38.9
	Often	6	33.3	33.3	72.2
	Always	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How important is it that your friends practice Christianity?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unimportant	2	11.1	11.1	11.1
	Neutral	6	33.3	33.3	44.4
	Important	5	27.8	27.8	72.2
	Very important	5	27.8	27.8	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How important is it to have friends who attends youth group or church?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unimportant	1	5.6	5.6	5.6
	Neutral	3	16.7	16.7	22.2
	Important	6	33.3	33.3	55.6
	Very important	8	44.4	44.4	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How important is it to have snacks/food at youth group?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unimportant	4	22.2	22.2	22.2
	Neutral	7	38.9	38.9	61.1
	Important	4	22.2	22.2	83.3
	Very important	3	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	18	100.0	100.0	

How important is it to play games and have activities in youth group?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	8	44.4	47.1	47.1
	Important	6	33.3	35.3	82.4
	Very important	3	16.7	17.6	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	5.6		
Total		18	100.0		

How important is it that the sermon is relevant to your life?

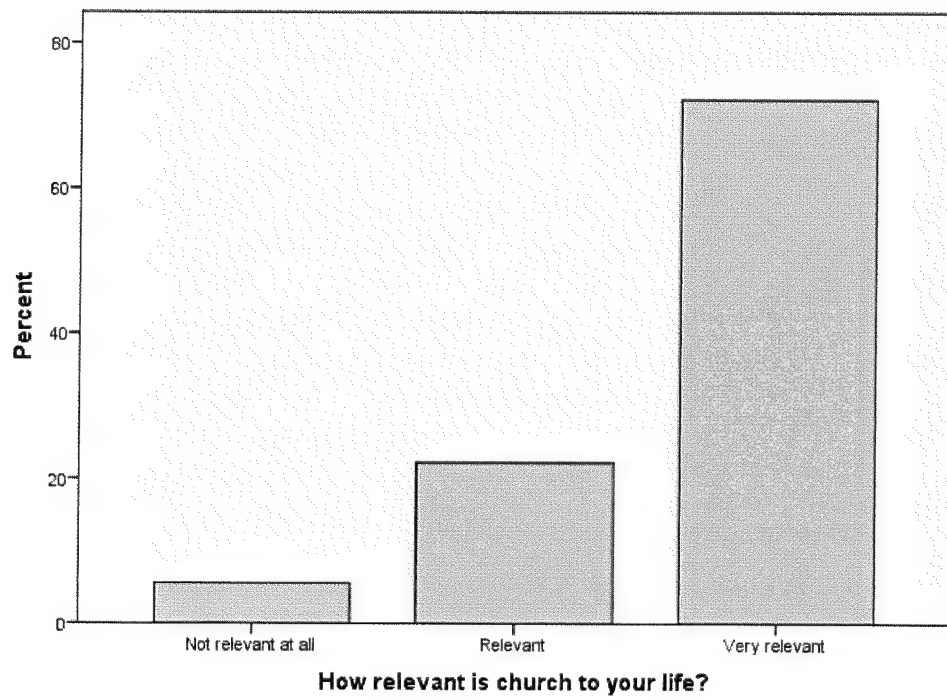
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Important	8	44.4	47.1	47.1
	Very important	9	50.0	52.9	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	5.6		
Total		18	100.0		

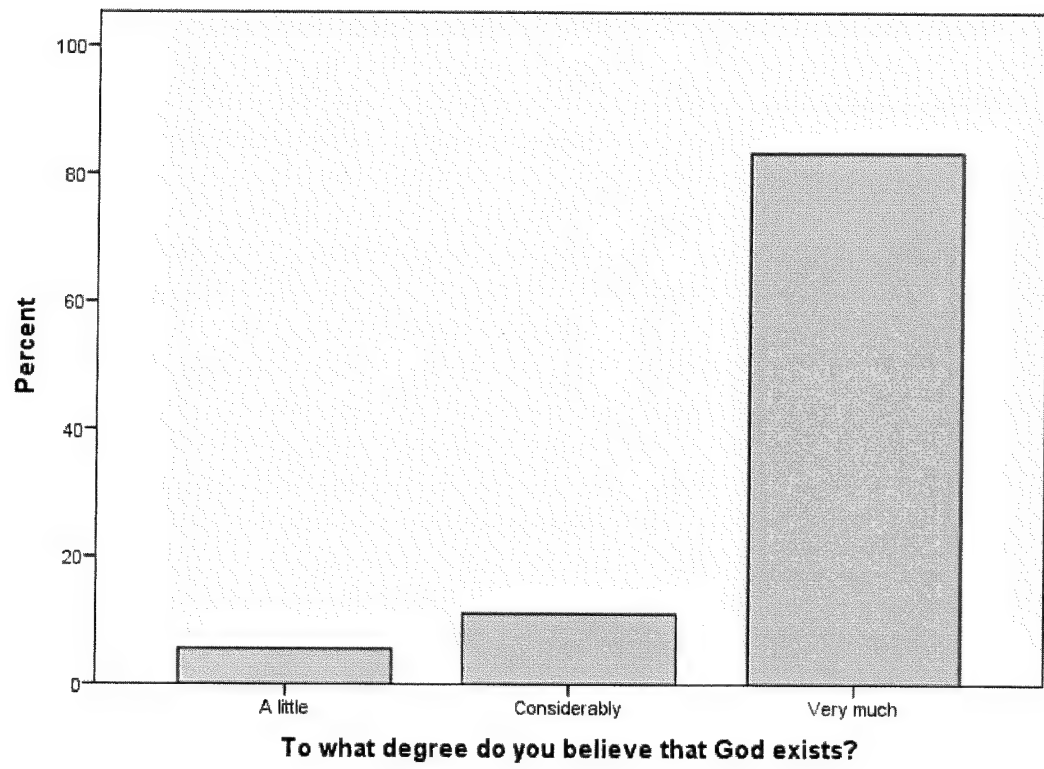
How important is it to continue practicing Christianity in your young adult years?

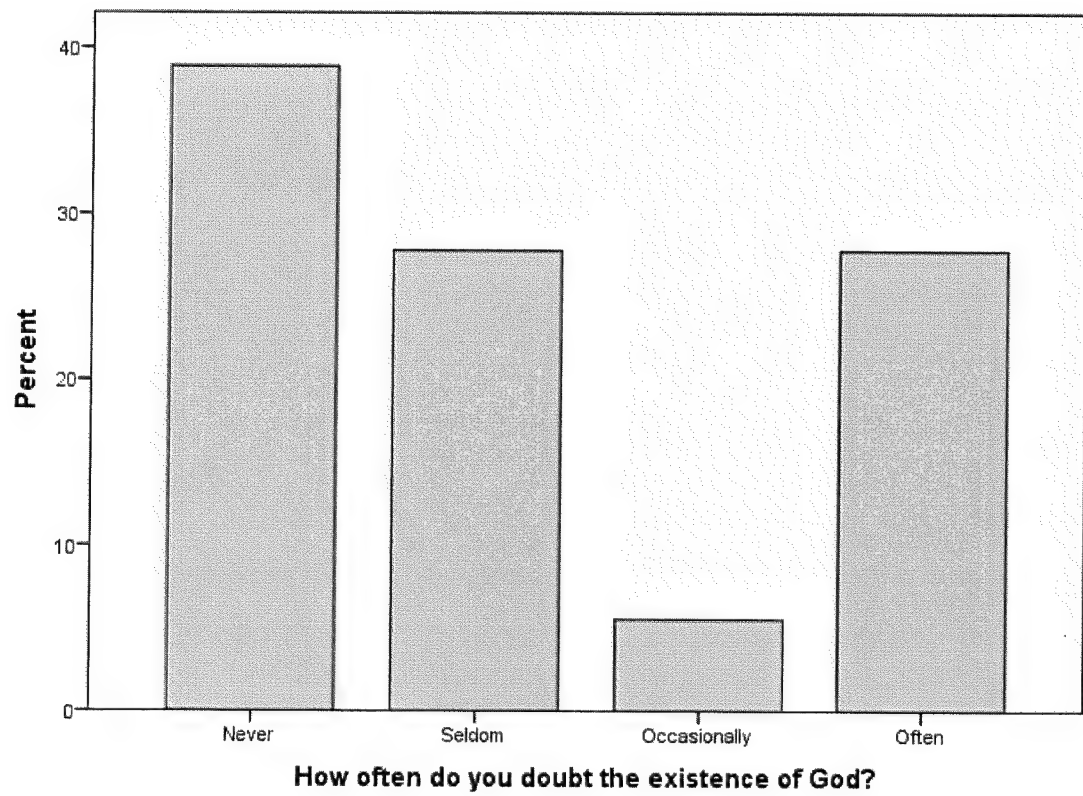
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	1	5.6	5.9	5.9
	Important	3	16.7	17.6	23.5
	Very important	13	72.2	76.5	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	5.6		
Total		18	100.0		

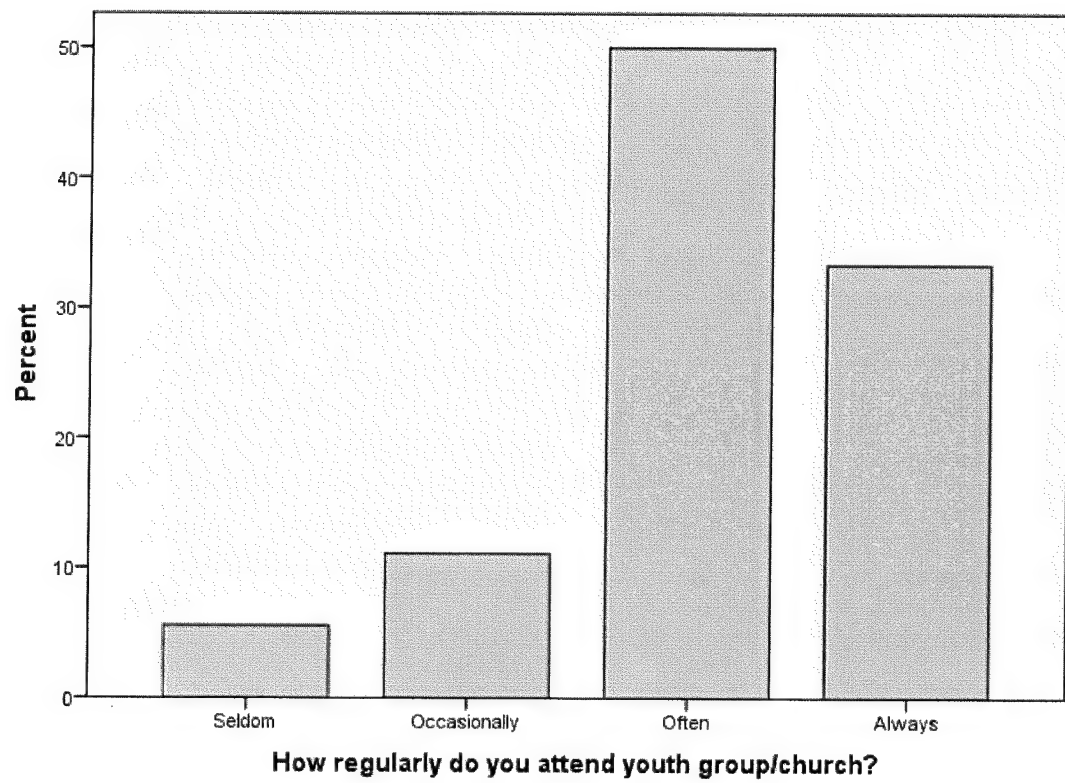
How important is it to maintain relationships established through faith as you grow older?

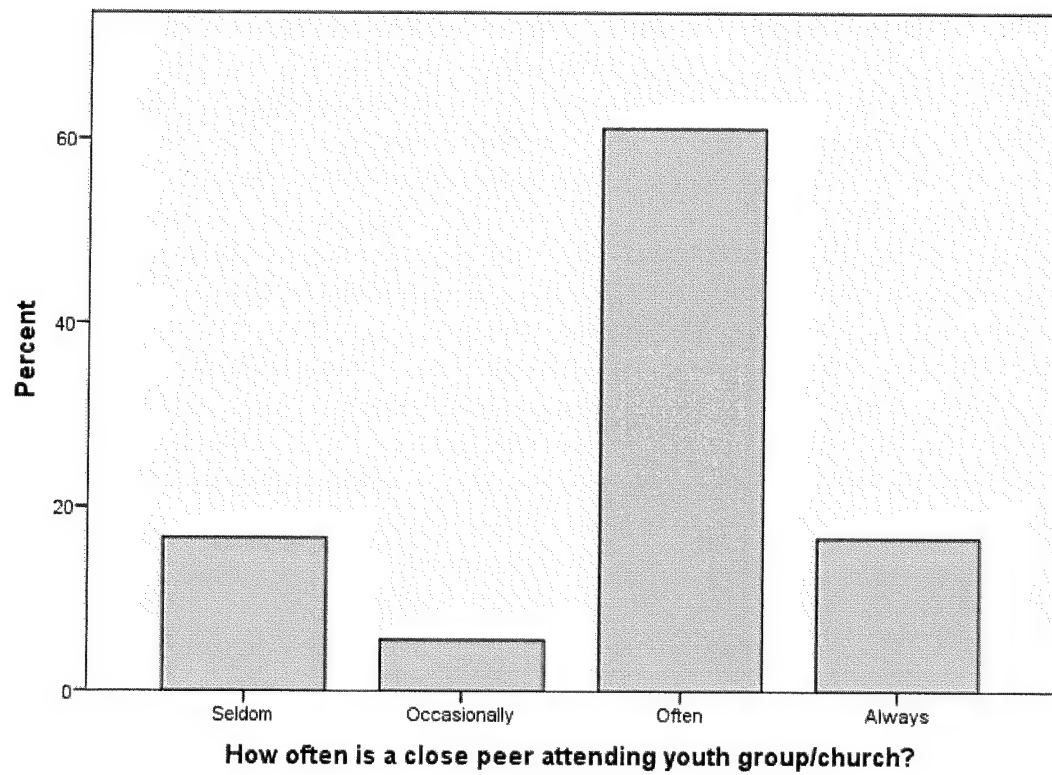
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	2	11.1	11.8	11.8
	Important	4	22.2	23.5	35.3
	Very important	11	61.1	64.7	100.0
	Total	17	94.4	100.0	
Missing	System	1	5.6		
Total		18	100.0		

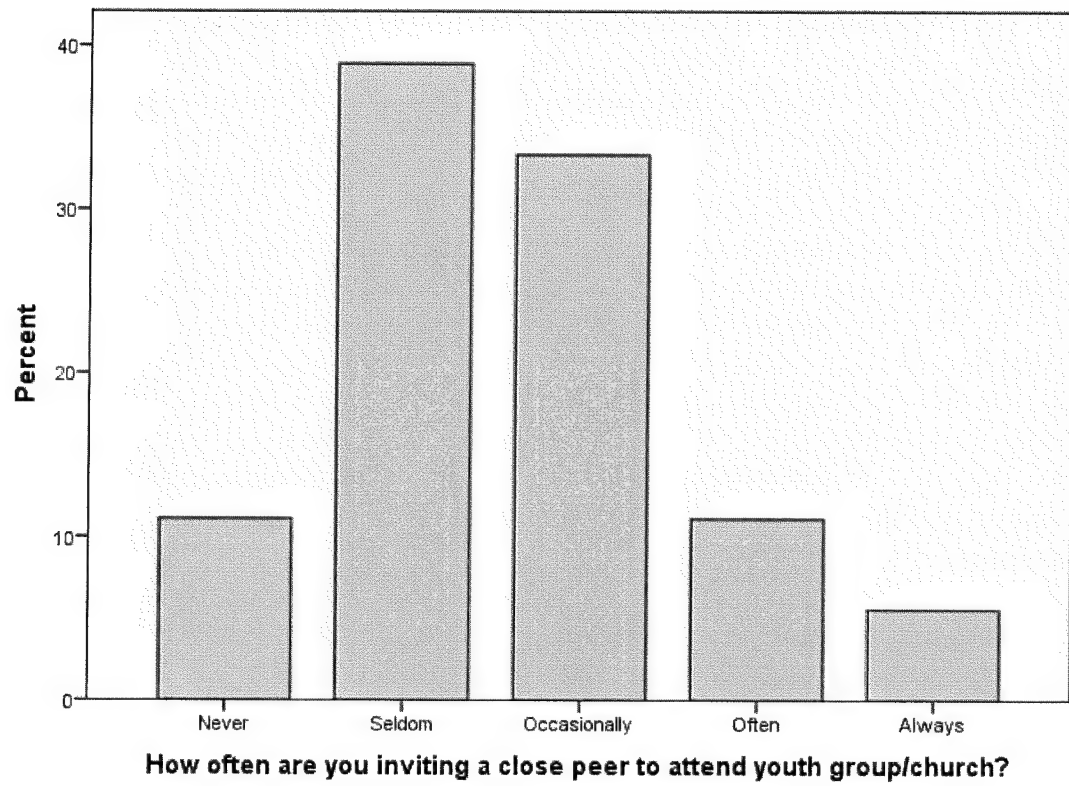


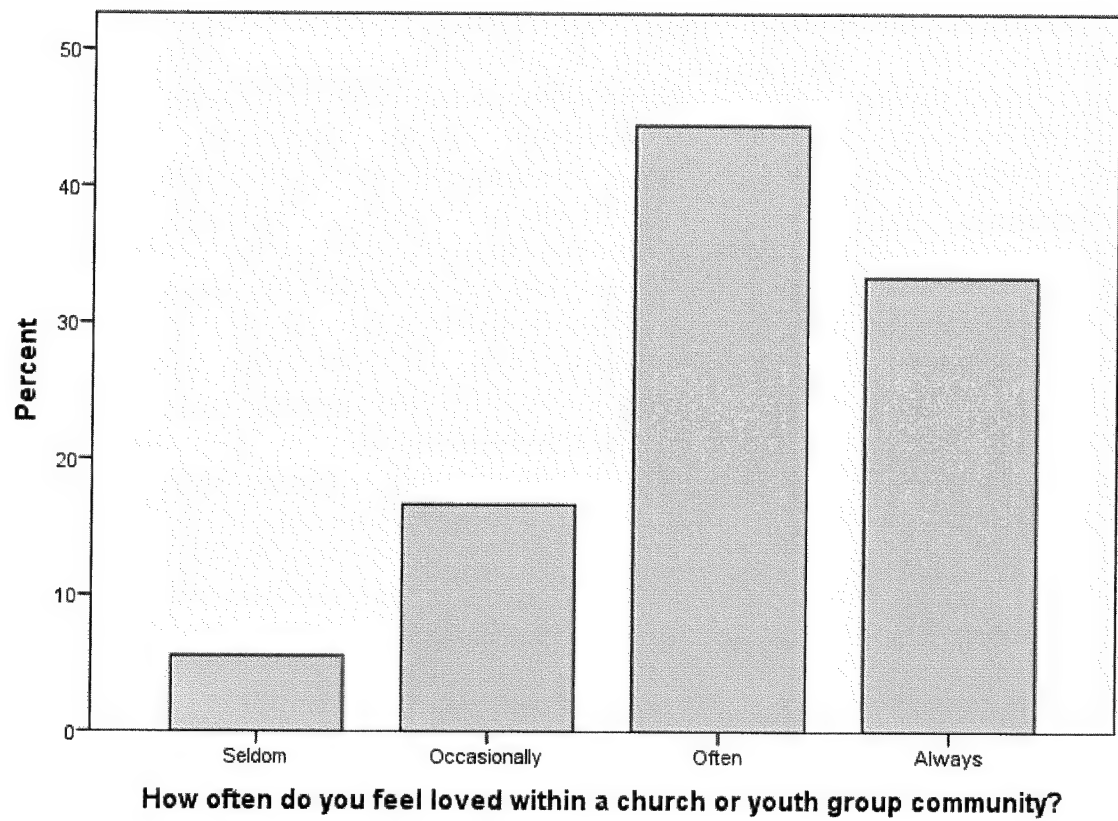


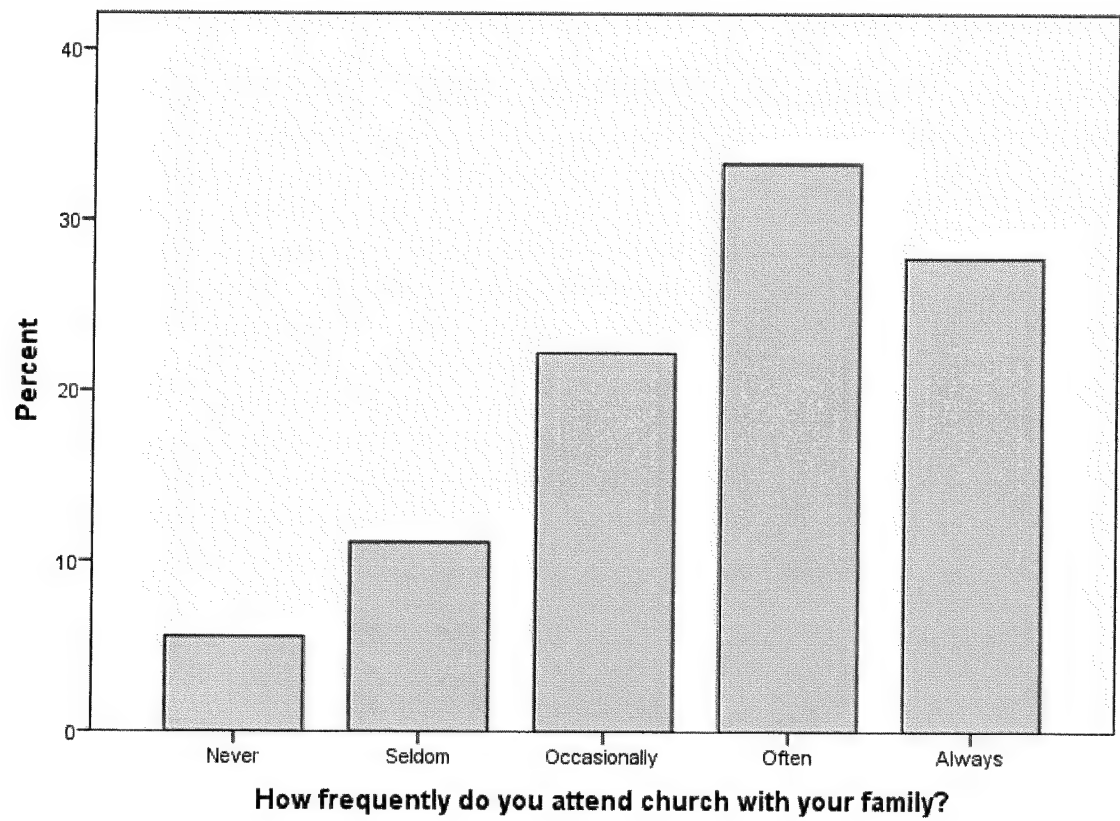


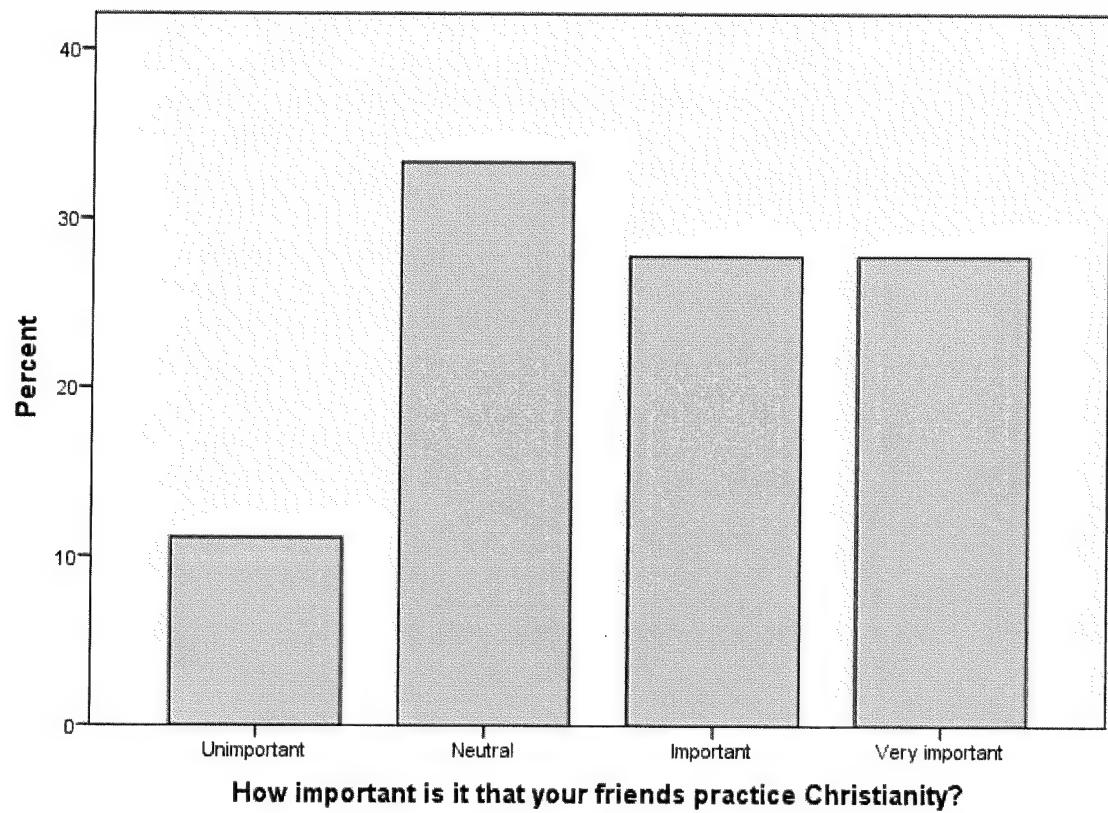


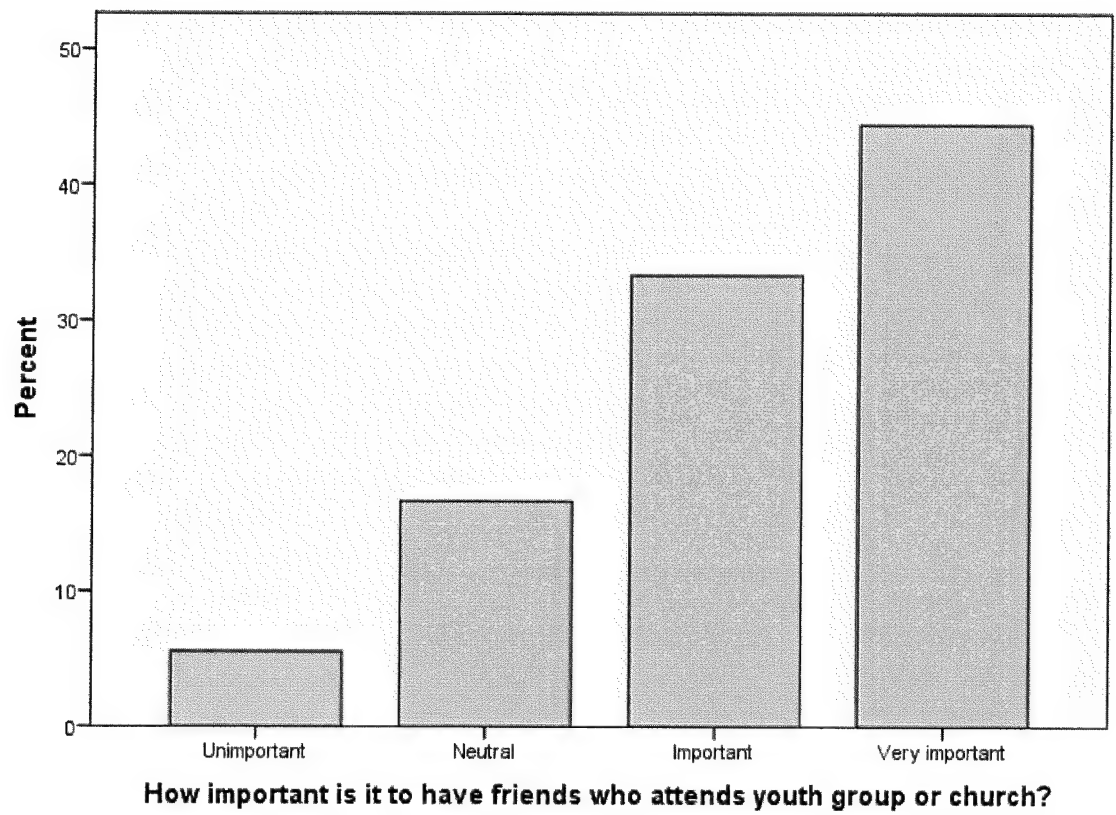


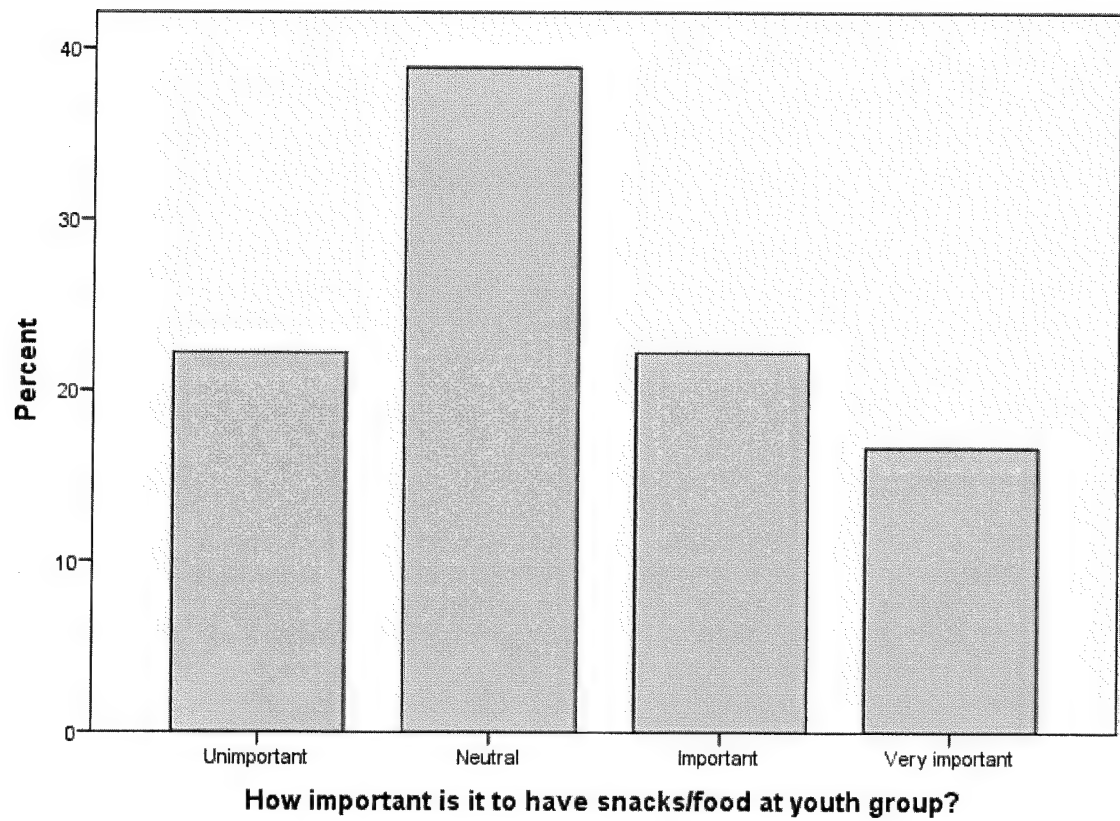


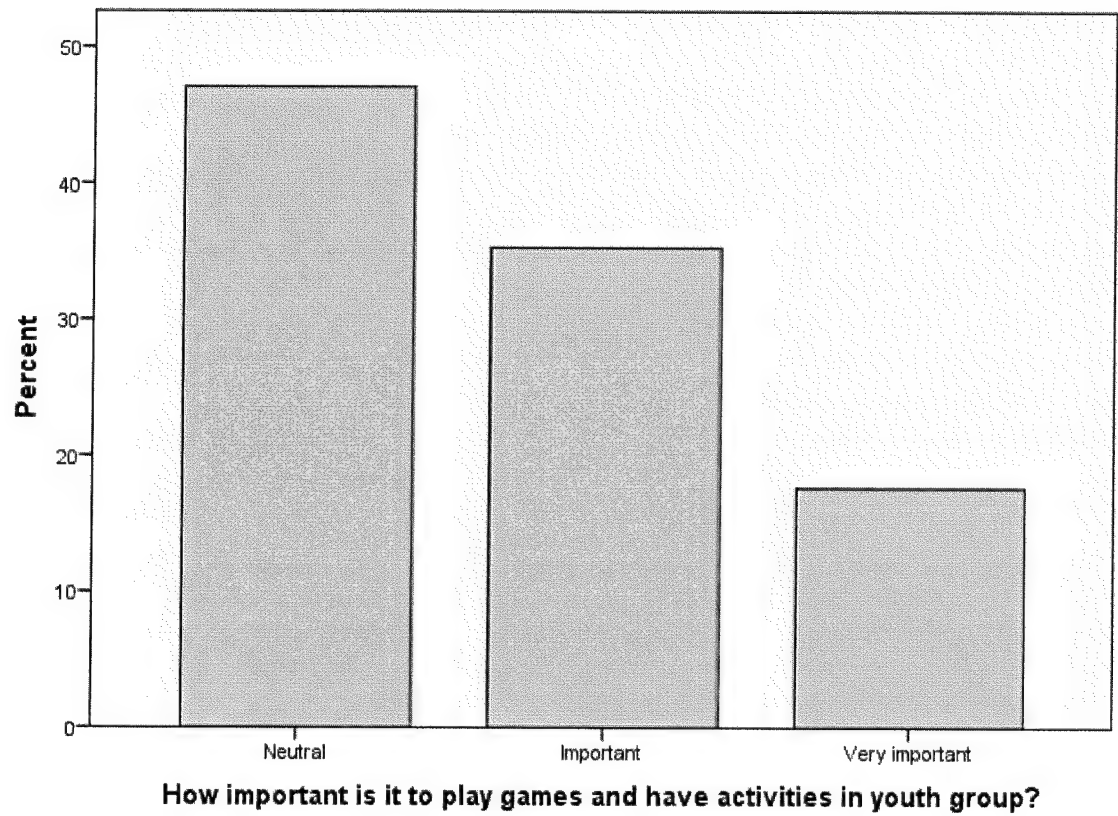


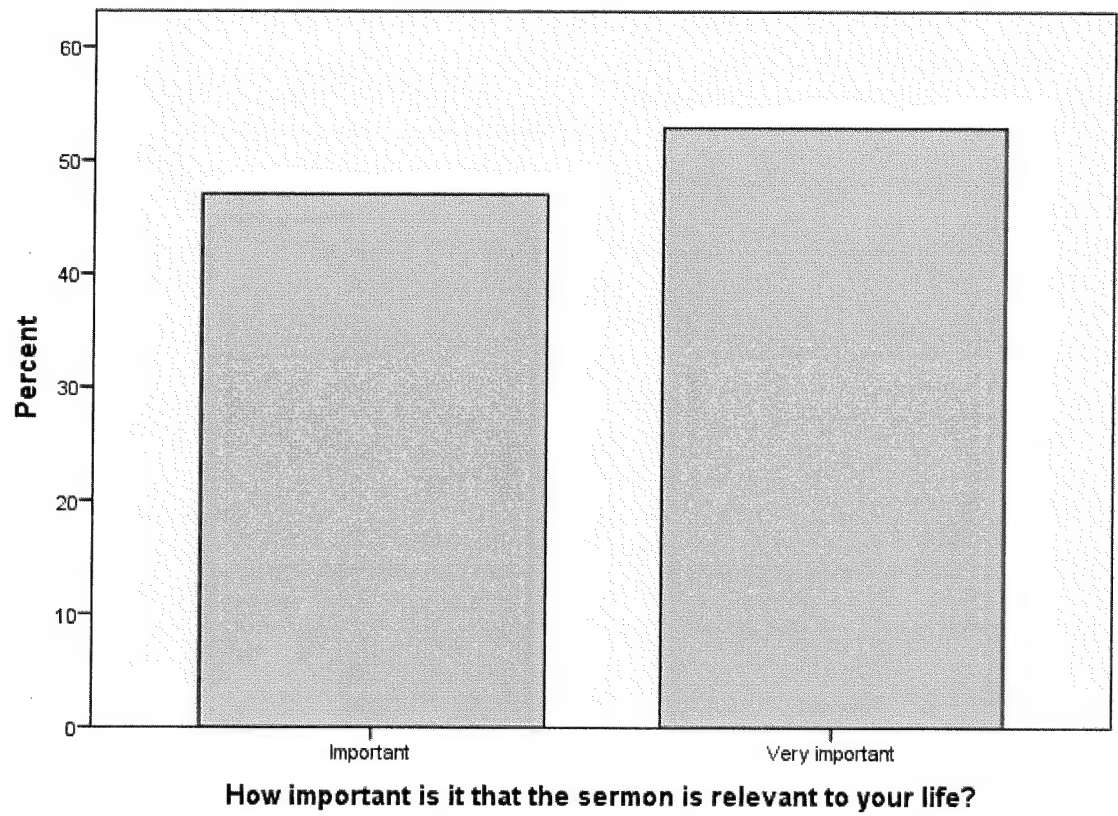


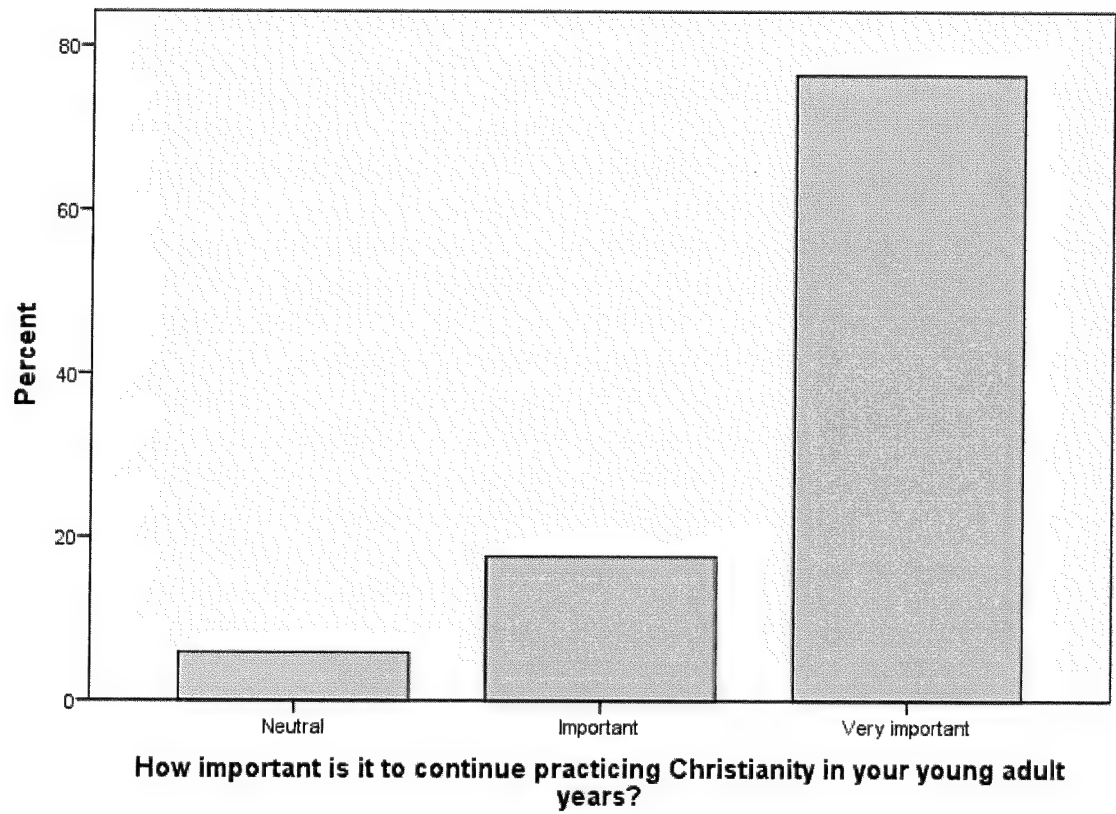


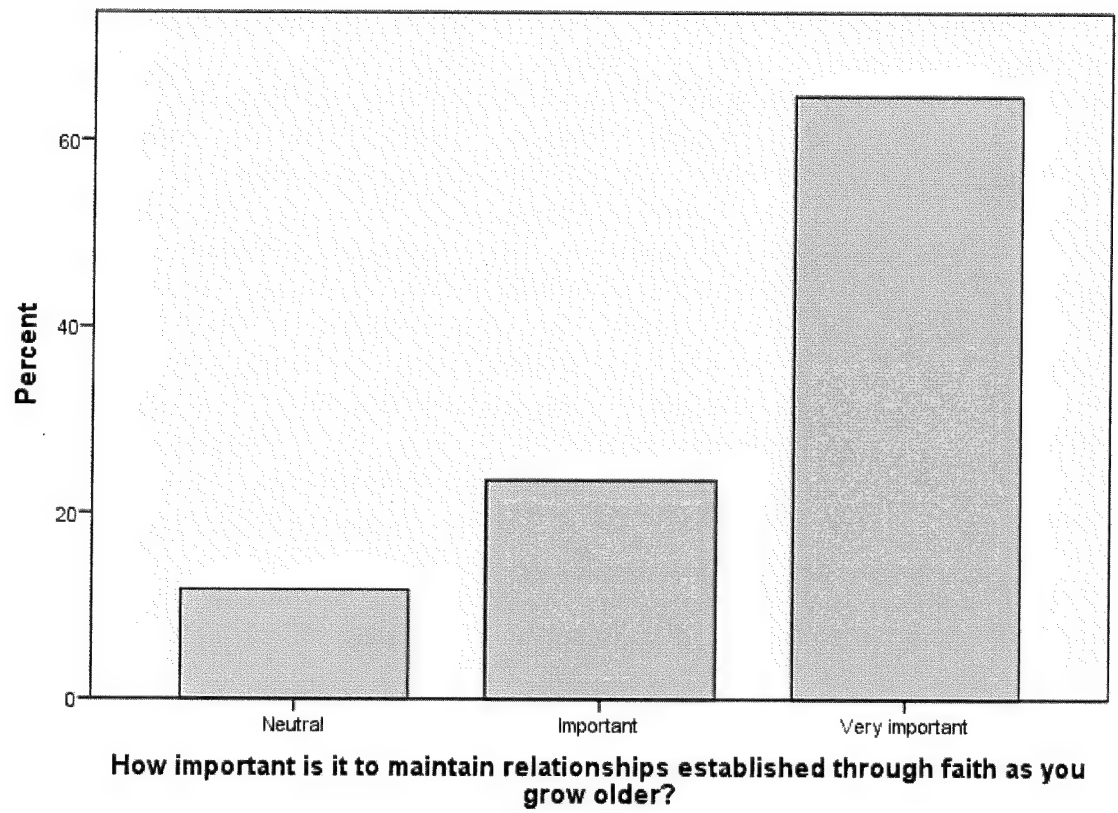












APPENDIX C

DOING LIFE MODEL

Doing Life: A Student Ministry Curriculum for a Discipleship Making Youth Group

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²¹⁴ School calendars should be included in the packet and based on where the majority of your students attend.

Doing Life Vision:

A Discipleship Making Student Ministries

Jesus commands us to go and make disciples of all peoples. This starts for us at Bridges Community Church with making disciples of the next generation. The way we make disciples is to instill in our students an unwavering belief in their identity in Christ. Today, the world is bombarding students with empty promises with which to base their identity within. The promise is that somehow the things of this world can fill the God sized void in their heart. The gospel teaches something radically different. We aim to lead students into an understanding that hope and fulfillment is found in recognizing their sin separation from God, humbling themselves, accepting God's grace through Christ and then rooting themselves in their true identity that is found in Christ alone. The result of this will be a generation of teenagers who are marked by a faith that is filled with hope, power, humility and one that gives the glory to God alone.

How We Live The Doing Life Vision:

- Intentional relational discipleship
- Intentional personal discipleship
- Practical Bible teaching
- Creative opportunity for worship and service
- Create authentic community

Theological Foundation: Luke 5:1-11

One day as Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret, the people were crowding around him and listening to the word of God. ² He saw at the water's edge two boats, left there by the fishermen, who were washing their nets. ³ He got into one of the boats, the one belonging to Simon, and asked him to put out a little from shore. Then he sat down and taught the people from the boat. When he had finished speaking, he said to Simon, "Put out into deep water, and let down the nets for a catch." Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because you say so, I will let down the nets." When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to break. ⁷ So they signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus' knees and said, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" For he and all his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, and so were James and John, the sons of Zebedee, Simon's partners. Then Jesus said to Simon, "Don't be afraid; from now on you will fish for people." So they pulled their boats up on shore, left everything and followed him.

Getting Started

Structure

The structure for Doing Life discipleship groups is as follows:

- Group: same gender and same grade students
- Leaders: 1-2 adult leaders
- Commitment: One-year commitment beginning in August/September each year for both students and leaders.
- Schedule: Twice a month during the school year with scheduled breaks.

Schedule

Doing Life groups typically meet for an hour and a half, twice a month and at each student's home on a rotating schedule. Groups usually begin meeting in the fall and break for finals before Christmas, resume when school starts back in January, and break before finals in May or June. When and how group meets is up to the leader and how they feel led for their group. Below are suggestions based on past groups:

- Dinner – For at least the first year of Doing Life groups, students should eat dinner together at the beginning of each meeting. This means that the home hosting Doing Life group would provide dinner that night.

Behind the Scenes

Students have expressed eating a meal together provides an opportunity for relationship building. We read in Acts 2:42, "They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer." Thus it is the "breaking bread" together that solidifies relationships.

- Time – Doing Life groups can meet from 7-8:30 pm.
 - Pick a time that is best for the Doing Life leader.
 - If you are flexible, then you can try to accommodate, as many of the students' schedules as you can.
- Night schedule – On a normal Doing Life night, the goal would be to spend 30 minutes eating dinner, then the next hour for meeting.
 - In the beginning 45 minutes may be necessary for relationship building.
- Breaks – Breaks are needed from time to time for the students and the leaders.
 - Schedule nights off for natural breaks such as Thanksgiving Break and Spring Break, etc.

- Be sensitive to your group's schedules (especially school). Many times it's not a good idea to plan a Doing Life during finals week.
- Be intentional about scheduling "fun nights" during the semester.
- Other events – it is absolutely imperative that Doing Life groups hang out with their leader outside of scheduled Doing Life meetings.
 - Have a sleepover during the first semester of freshman year. This will go a long way in getting to know students and them getting to know their leader and each other.
 - Go to their sporting events occasionally.
 - Plan other extra outings such as lunches, getting ice cream, playing Frisbee, etc.

First Parent Meeting

The most powerful force in a teenager's life is their parent. Long before they entered a Doing Life Group, youth group or even Church, they had their parents. Students will have their parents long after they leave Doing Life groups, and teenagers will be greatly impacted by their parents for good *and/or* for bad.²¹⁵

Parent Meeting Guidelines

- A youth or another pastor should be present at the first parent meeting to explain the idea and commitment behind Doing Life groups. This is important, as Doing Life groups cannot be successful unless the whole Church is involved.
- The first parent meeting should be doing a convince time when both parents and students can attend.
- Split boys and girls up after the parent meeting so they have time to meet the students in their group.

The following should be covered the youth pastor or a staff member at the initial parent meeting:

- Explain the vision behind Doing Life groups and the importance of the commitment.
- Emphasize the importance of parental buy-in for Doing Life involvement.
- Have each student fill out an information sheet.
- Ask a parent to be the coordinator of your group. They will be in charge of communicating with the other parents and scheduling the locations of the Doing

²¹⁵ <http://www.simplyyouthministry.com/jims-thoughts-11.html>.

Life group meetings. This will free up the adult leader from having to coordinate the schedule and communicate it each week.

- Explain the model of rotating houses for dinner, but make sure to emphasize that not every family must host. Each group can choose a different way to go about meetings.
- Explain the use of a Doing Life covenant validates the seriousness of the commitment the group is making for the year. See next page for sample covenant. Both parents and student should sign.

Sample Doing Life Covenant

The Student Ministries at Bridges Community Church is excited about the time ahead of us. This is going to be an adventure for your teenager, filled with ups and downs but more importantly, God's grace. We will grow and change in our own unexpected ways as well as a community of believers who are chasing after God. Let the journey begin!

A journey like this is successful only if we all are committed to the journey together. For this reason, we ask a 1-year commitment from each student in the Doing Life group that is renewable each year. The main commitment includes being present (mentally, spiritually, emotionally and physically) on the nights we meet as a Doing Life Group.

Below is a description of the structure, purpose, and function of a Doing Life Group:

- State what type of group this is (i.e. this is an all 9th grade boys group).
- State the day and time during the school year the group will meet (We will eat dinner together, light hang out time, and get spend time together)
- We will rotate meetings and dinner at houses of those involved in our group. (This should not be a requirement of a family. Those willing to open their house are appreciated).
- Doing Life groups will take a break during the summer except for optional outings (camping, sleepover, etc)
- Any student making this commitment is agreeing to the terms stated in this covenant.
- The goal of our group is to be in a discipleship relationship with God and each other.
- Doing Life groups will worship through accountability, prayer, study, and fellowship.
- Doing Life groups will use scriptures in the Bible as their primary guide.
- Over time, the expectation is that trust will grow and we each will share and speak honestly about our lives.

Although the guidelines may sound rigid, it will be flexible. As a Doing Life Group leader, we understand "life happens". We will work together to make the group a reflection of God's grace and love to each of us. We are looking forward for all of us to make this big step together.

Student, if you agree to these guidelines, sign and date below. Also please have the adults that will be supporting you (transportation, talking with you, praying with you, etc) sign below. This is saying that they will support you in your commitment.

Doing Life Groups

Freshman Year

Important Things to Do and Talk About:

- Fun! Getting to know you each other in the first year is crucial. We have a huge bank of ideas for activities and fun get-to-know you games. Board games are also a fun way to break the ice.
- What Doing Life Group means – have intentional discussions with your group about the *why* behind getting together. A great idea is to have them come up with a list of reasons they meet rather than you telling them.
- Doing Life Group Boundaries – Letting the Students determiners of this list, discuss things such as accountability, confidentiality, having each other's backs.
- Learning how to encourage each other and pray for each other. There are times when students want to pray but lack confidence and guidance. Teaching students the five steps of prayers (Praise, Confession, Repentance, Intercessory, and Petition).
 1. Praise – Acknowledging God's sovereignty, power to answer prayers.²¹⁶
 2. Confession – We must confess our sins to God.²¹⁷
 3. Repentance – The act of repentance. We must seek God's forgiveness.²¹⁸
 4. Intercessory – Praying for others, for God to intercede.²¹⁹
 5. Petition – Praying for yourself.²²⁰
- The Gospel – Teach and discuss the basics of the Gospel. Students are at a place where they need to define what the Gospel says and what it means for them. For example, the Gospel is the Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of Jesus, the Christ. The Gospel is God's invitation to receive his Grace for all eternity.
- Prayer – many students are fearful of praying out loud or haven't had a lot of experience with prayer. Creative ways to teach prayer and open their perspective of prayer are good for this age.
- Doing Life Group Sleepover – great way to build relationships. Consider a overnight camping trip or sleeping at the Church.

²¹⁶ Psalms 103:19.

²¹⁷ 1 John 1:9.

²¹⁸ Acts 3:19.

²¹⁹ Romans 8:26-27, Ephesians 6:18, James 5:14.

²²⁰ Philippians 4:6.

- Topics determined by the needs of your group – What do the students in your group struggle with? Choose a study or two on topics that interest them. Discuss relationships, friendships and their identity in Christ. This is pertinent to freshmen students.

Sophomore Year

Important Things to Do and Talk About:

- Fun and earning trust with each other – this is still a foundational year to build sharing. Plan and organize activities they are challenging. Ask them to build relationships with the people in the group they don't know as well. Examples, organized prayer partners, splitting them into smaller groups for discussion, and extended period of sharing time.
- Hanging out outside of Doing Life Group is a big deal, and a sleepover goes a long way in building relationships.
- Bible Study – pick a book of the Bible and read through it together. Discuss how it relates to their lives and *why* reading the Bible is important. Some students may not have tried this, and this is an incredible opportunity to learn about how to do it together.
- Topics should be determined by the needs of the group. Continue to be sensitive to the things your group struggles with on a daily basis. Stress, school, and work is typically greater sophomore year. Talking through scriptures about not worrying, etc. If your group struggles with partying, do a few weeks on the *why* behind avoiding sin. Relationships (with friends and opposite sex) are still a big deal this year as well.
- Prayer – getting real with prayer. Try outside the box prayer activities. One idea (works well with a bigger group) is to pick one person each week to pray in depth over at the end of each Doing Life Group.
- Praise Reports- Keep a list each week of the prayer requests, when appropriate. Ask the students if there has been any answer to the prayers and ask them to share a praise report.
- Encouraging each other

Junior Year

Important Things to Do and Talk About:

- Topics they are facing right currently.
- Revisit dating and sex (use series and books when needed).
- Invest in the leadership abilities of your students – have them all be praying out loud. Take several weeks to let them take turns leading Doing Life groups under your guidance.
- Revisit the ideas of accountability and vulnerability – discuss what it means and *why* it's important.

Senior Year

Important Things to Do and Talk About:

- Preparation for college.
- Kara Powell's series "Sticky Faith" – 10 lessons to nurture faith beyond high school
- Tough questions about God
- Seniors may have more of an ability to discuss deep ideas.
- More in-depth Bible study on Sin, Grace, and Salvation.
- Pray over them
- Foot washing – Have them wash each other's feet.
- Partake in Communion together.
- Go on a short-term mission trip together.

Teaching Ideas

Bible Study:

- Choose a book of the Bible to study and pick up a small group discussion book revolving around that book of the Bible.

Books we have at the church:

- Book of James with Max Lucado
- N.T. Wright study guides for Ephesians, Acts, John, and Matthew

Video Series:

- *Nooma* Videos by Rob Bell
- Made to Make a Difference – Max Lucado
- The Truth about Sex – Doug Fields

Girls:

- Friends, Boys, Etc
 - For Young Women Only by Shaunti Feldhahn
- Body and Christian Living
 - From Head to Foot by Annie Downs
 - Her: Becoming a Proverbs 31 Girl by Emily Cole
 - Perfectly Unique by Annie Downs
- Novels for discussion
 - Redeeming Love by Francine Rivers

Dating/Sex:

- The New Rules for Love, Sex, and Dating – Andy Stanley
- Truth about Sex – Doug Fields

Group studies:

- Sticky Faith by Kara Powell (10 DVD group study)
- Soul Tending: Life Forming Practices for Older Youth & Young Adults by Beverly Burton, Drew Dyson, Kenda Creasy Dean
- Anything but Ordinary: Where Heaven and Earth Collide by Brad Tate and Chase Allcott
- More Lost than Found by Jared Herd
- Blessed Are the Uncool: Living Authentically in a World of Show by Paul Grant

Teaching the Gospel:

- Video by Francis Chan – “Just Stop and Think” (can be found on YouTube)
- Why Jesus? – video series by David Nasser

Resource books on Youth Ministry

- Andrew Root and Kenda C. Dean, *The Theological Turn in Youth Ministry* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2011).
- Andy Stanley and Stuart Hall, *The Seven Checkpoints: Seven Principles Every Teenager* (Baker, 2004).
- Barry St. Clair et al., *The Magnet Effect: Designing Outreach Events That Draw Kids to Christ* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1994).
- Chap Clark and Kara E. Powell, *Deep Ministry in a Shallow World: Not-So-Secret Findings about Youth Ministry* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006).
- Chap Clark, *Hurt 2.0: Inside the World of Teenagers*. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2004).
- Dallas Willard, *The Spirit of Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1988).
- David Kinnaman, *You Lost Me: Why Young Christians Are Leaving Church and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011).
- Doug Fields, *Help! I'm a Student Leader!: Practical Ideas and Guidance on Leadership* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005).
- Doug Fields, *Purpose-Driven Youth Ministry: Nine Essential Foundations for Healthy Growth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1998).
- Drew Dyck, *Generation Ex-Christian: Why Young Adults Are Leaving the Faith... and How to Bring Them Back* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 2010).
- Duffy Robbins, *Building a Youth Ministry that Builds Disciples: A Small Book about a Big Idea* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).
- Duffy Robbins, *The Ministry of Nurture: A Youth Worker's Guide to Discipling Teenagers* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990).
- E. M. Bounds, *Power through Prayer* (Chicago, IL: Moody, 1979).
- Eric Geiger and Jeff Borton, *Simple Student Ministry: A Clear Process for Strategic Youth Discipleship* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 2009).
- George Barna, *Growing True Disciples: New Strategies for Producing Genuine Followers of Christ* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook, 2001).

- Kara E. Powell, Brad M. Griffin, and Cheryl A. Crawford, *Sticky Faith: Youth Worker Edition* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011).
- Ken Ham, Britt Beemer, and Todd Hillard, *Already Gone: Why Your Kids Will Quit Church and What: You Can Do to Stop It* (Green Forest, AR: Master Books, 2009).
- Kendra C. Dean, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church* (New York, NY: Oxford, 2010).
- Kent Julian, *101 Ideas for Making Disciples in Your Youth Group* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007).
- Les Christie, *When Church Kids Go Bad: How to Love and Work with Rude, Obnoxious, and Apathetic Students* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008).
- Mark DeVries, *Sustainable Youth Ministry: Why Most Youth Ministry Doesn't Last and What Your Church Can Do about It* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2008).
- Reggie Joiner, *Think Orange: Imagine the Impact When Church and Family Collide* (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2009).
- Richard J. Foster, *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth* (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1998).
- Richard R. Dunn, *Shaping the Spiritual Life of Students: A Guide for Youth Workers, Teachers, Pastors, and Campus Ministers* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001).
- Thom S. Rainer and Sam S. Rainer III, *Essential Church? Reclaiming a Generation of Dropouts* (Nashville, TN: Broadman, 2008).
- Tim Elmore, *Generation Y: Our Last Chance to Save Their Future* (Atlanta, GA: Poet Gardener Publishing, 2010).

Child Protection Policy

Note: *Each church and/or denomination may have a different Child Protection Policy. Please check with your church administrator or executive pastor to determine what the appropriate protocol is for your church.*

Crisis:

- If a student tells you about anything related to physical or sexual abuse, you are a **mandated reporter** and must come to Pastors Marcus and Steve and follow the protocol for that situation.
- Make sure all students know that in some situations, you are unable to keep confidence and that you must report what they told you.
- If a student tells you about self-harm (cutting, eating disorders, suicidal thoughts, etc), let them know you may not be able to keep that in confidence to ensure that they are getting the care that they need. Feel free to come talk to Pastor Marcus and discuss how to move forward with that student and if/when to contact parents.

Child Protection 101:

- Rule of Three – Never be in a room alone with one student.
- Always have three people there. Even an allegation of sexual misconduct can really ruin your life and our ministry.
- Do not put a student, the church or yourself in a dangerous situation.
- Doing Life Group leaders will need to submit to an annual background check.

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VITA

**MARCUS HILL
NOVEMBER 29, 2015
PLACE OF BIRTH: LOS ANGELES**

EMPLOYMENT

January 2015- Present **Los Altos Christian Schools** Los Altos, CA

Dean of Spiritual Life

- Oversight of Chapel services
- Teaching Christian Education
- Teaching Christian Formation
- Pastoral Counseling

January 2015 – Present **Bridges Community Church** Los Altos, CA

Pastor of Student Ministries

- Discipleship of middle school and high school students
- Training of adult leaders
- Oversight of youth mission and camping trips

EDUCATION

January 2013-May 2016 **Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary** Charlotte, NC

- Doctor of Ministry in Pastoral Skills

July 2008-December 2010 **Azusa Pacific University** Azusa, CA

- Master of Divinity

September 2004-June 2007 **Seattle Pacific University** Seattle, WA

- Bachelor of Art in Political Science